Meskwaki Along the Upper South Skunk River:

AGENT MALIN AMONG THE WICKIUPS

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Pioneer References of Their Presence in Hamilton, Story, and Polk Counties

Meskwaki Along the Upper South Skunk River: Pioneer References of Their Presence in Hamilton, Story, and Polk Counties

Compiled by

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Arlen Twedt is a retired educator and local historian. In 1995, he started the Central Iowa Norwegian Project to preserve the settlement history of Norwegian immigrants in Story, Polk, Hamilton, and Hardin counties. More information about the project is available at the following Web site: http://genloc.com/NorStory/CINProj/index.htm

The cover photograph for this publication is from the Duren Ward Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa and is reprinted by permission. Duren Ward, a founding member of the Iowa Anthropological Association, collected documents, artifacts, and photographs at the Meskwaki Settlement during July and August, 1905. Agent Malin, the name on the photograph, is William G. Malin who was the U.S. Agent for the Meskwaki Settlement from 1899 to 1907. In 1900, there were approximately 360 Meskwaki living in the settlement in 65 households, most of them living in wickiups with only a few living in frame houses. *Source*: "Meskwaki History" CD, State Historical Society of Iowa, 2004

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2012

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Preface

My interest in the interaction between white settlers and Meskwaki Indians began in 1978 when my father introduced me to his first cousin, Amos Twedt, to help me learn more about my family's history. Amos' mother died when he was three years old, and from 1899 to 1906 he lived with his grandparents on their farm south of Roland, Iowa. One of Amos' childhood memories was of Meskwaki Indians stopping at the farm. He recalled that his grandmother, my great grandmother, always gave them a couple of chickens and some potatoes and vegetables from her root cellar. Later, when I became interested in the general history of Norwegian settlement in central Iowa, I found other references to Meskwaki camping by the Skunk River and begging or trading items for chickens, flour, and other food at farmsteads near the river.

At one time I thought I might write an article for a historical journal about Meskwaki hunting, trapping, and fishing along the Upper South Skunk River, but after organizing this collection of references into a hopefully readable and understandable document, I have come to realize this is an impossibility for me. Although I am very familiar with the early history of Norwegian immigrant settlement in central Iowa, I believe I do not have enough insight into the thinking of the early white settlers or the native people regarding their interaction. Pioneers' attitudes toward Native Americans varied considerably, and the attitudes reflected in the references in this compilation range all the way from friendliness, respect, and admiration to racism, bigotry, and contempt. More importantly, without being a Meskwaki and understanding the Meskwaki way of life, I have no way of knowing what it meant for them to approach a farmstead and ask for chickens, flour and other food items. Was it begging as some of the pioneers thought or a custom they practiced with other members of their own tribe and other tribes? According to Amos, it was the same people who stopped at my great grandparents' farmstead each year, both on their way to the Skunk River and when they returned to their permanent settlement in Tama County. This suggests to me that it was an event the Meskwaki and my great grandparents looked forward to each year. I know Amos certainly did. Therefore, I think my contribution to preserving this part of central Iowa's history is best accomplished in the form of a compilation.

I am grateful to everyone who took the time to write about their experiences with the Meskwaki and to everyone who has shared their family stories about the Meskwaki. They are acknowledged within the document, but I have not acknowledged my wife, Asta, who proofread and made editing suggestions for this compilation. I am always grateful for her interest and support of my local history projects.

Arlen Twedt
Ankeny, Iowa
August 2012

Introduction

This document contains pioneer references to the presence of Meskwaki Indians along the Upper South Skunk River found by the compiler during his research of Norwegian settlement in Story, Polk, and Hamilton counties. Norwegian immigrants founded a settlement southwest of Cambridge in 1855, and they established another settlement east of Story City the following year. By 1900, there were approximately 3,000 Norwegians living in southern Story County and northern Polk County, the so-called Southern Settlement, and 9,000 Norwegians living in northern Story, southern Hamilton, and southwest Hardin counties, the so-called Northern Settlement.

Both Norwegian settlements were near the Skunk River, a winter hunting and trapping area for the Sac and Fox (Meskwaki) Tribes until their removal to Kansas in 1846. In 1856, the Iowa Legislature passed a law authorizing the Meskwaki to purchase land in Iowa, and in 1857, Meskwaki began purchasing land in their former summer home along the Iowa River in Tama County. There they resumed their former lifestyle of planting and harvesting crops during the growing season and hunting and trapping along other rivers and creeks during the winter.

The pioneer references listed in this document were found in family histories, community and county histories, and local newspapers. They are reprinted as they appeared in their original source without any changes in punctuation, capitalization, etc., and they are listed beginning with references to Little Wall Lake in Hamilton County and ending two counties downstream with references to northeastern Polk County.

When possible, information about the specific geographic location being referred to is included whether it be to a campsite location along the Skunk River and one of its tributaries or to a nearby farmstead where Meskwaki begged for flour and chickens. This information is included by a "Location Information" heading that includes range, township, and section information in parentheses followed by a description of the area within a section if known.

The last three pages of this document contain county plat maps from the A. T. Andreas' *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa, 1875*. These maps were especially helpful in understanding where the wooded areas were located along the Upper South Skunk River and its tributaries in 1875, but other plat maps were consulted for information about where specific farmsteads were located. Also helpful was the 1885 Iowa Census which recorded the specific location within a section where the enumerator collected the census information.

In addition to plat maps, another helpful resource in identifying the range, township, and section information for these pioneer references was the U. S. Public Land Survey System which has been integrated into Google Earth. A special program for using Google Earth this way is available at http://www.earthpoint.us/Townships.aspx, and it is an excellent tool to use in combination with the 1875 Andreas county plat maps.

General Information about the Meskwaki Tribe and the Skunk River

The Meskwaki, or the Fox as they were sometimes called, originally lived along the St. Lawrence River in Canada, but wars with the Hurons forced them into Michigan and then into Wisconsin where they gained control of the Fox River. The map below shows where they lived in Wisconsin from 1669-1680 and their subsequent homes until the Treaty of 1842 required them to move to Kansas. Other information about Meskwaki history and culture and about the Skunk River is also contained in this section.

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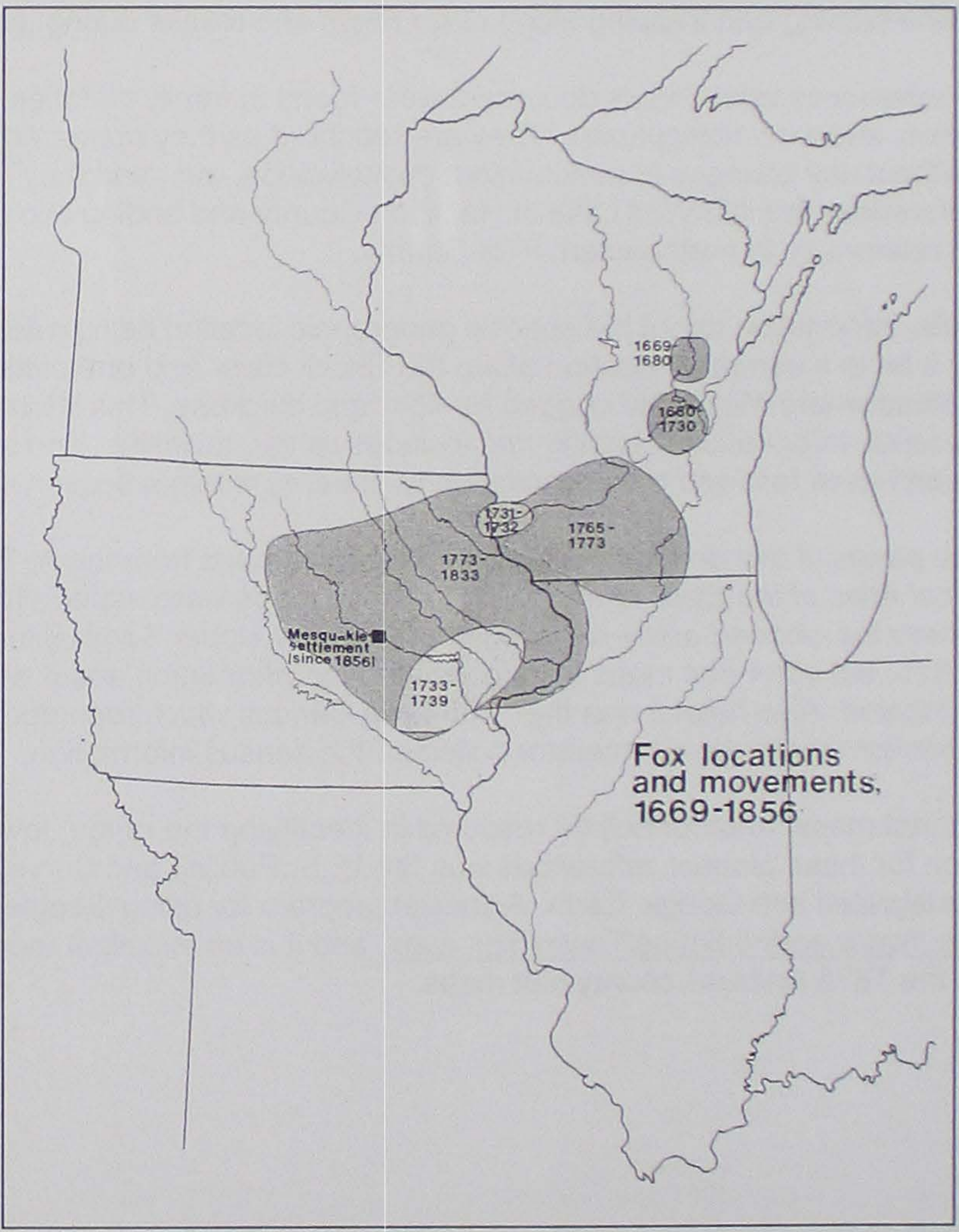
From a handout, "Historical Occupation Periods for Indian Tribes of the Upper Midwest 1400-1800," that does not state who prepared it, and I do not remember where I obtained it. This map does not reflect the 40-mile "Neutral Strip" established between the Sac and Fox (Meskwaki) and the Sioux in north central Iowa in 1830.



Fox locations and movements, 1669-1856

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Web resources about the Meskwaki (Fox) Tribe:

See "Meskwaki History" in the "SHSI Digital Resources" section of the State Hisorical Society of Iowa's Web site at the URL below:
http://www.msswarriors.org/history/MeskinteractiveCD1/Pages/MeskwakiDirectionsPage.htm

Note:This site contains the CD on "Meskwaki History" published by the State Historical Society of Iowa in 2004. A press release for the CD is available at:
http://www.iowahistory.org/contacts/news_release/2006/history-of-meskwaki-cd-available.htm

Other Web resources:
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Fox_(tribe)
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meskwaki
http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/fox/foxehist.htm
http://www.uiowa.edu/~osa/archaeologyle.htm
http://www.native-languages.org/sac-fox.htm
http://www.rootsweb.com/~iadesmoi/Personal/Indians/indians2.htm
http://www.hanksville.org/storytellers/youngbear/
http://www.geocities.com/bigorrin/sf_kids.htm
Note: Revisited these Web sites on February 24, 2012.

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From:
http://www.msswarriors.org/history/MeskinteractiveCD1/Pages/Culture/Anthology/BuffaloTreatyof1842.htm

Meskwaki Anthology
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION OFFICE NOTES
From the desk of Johnathan L. Buffalo

Treaty of 1842

"I Want to live where men are free. Soon I will go to a new home. You will plant corn where my dead sleep. Our towns, the paths we have made, the flowers we have loved will soon be yours. I have moved many times. I have seen the white man put his foot in the track of the Indian and make the earth into fields and gardens. I know I must go far away, and you will be so glad when I am gone. You will soon forget the lodge fire, and the meat of the Indian has ever been free to the stranger, and he has asked for … what he has fought for… the right to be free."
Poweshiek, 1838 … Meskwaki

"The removal of the Foxes (Meskwaki) from all the land of the U.S. shall receive my early attention." **Agent Street, 1839**

"Found 200 Indians hid on and around this mound. They cried, "No Go! No Go!" But we took them to Ft. D[es Moines]." **Lieut. R S. Granger, U.S. Army, 1846.**

Captain John Allen
Allen was the highest military officer during the removal of the Sac and Meskwaki. As the representative of the U.S. military, he was present during the signing of the Treaty of 1842. He found the Meskwaki to have more difficulty than other tribes with the idea of "removal." But on a personal level, he got along well with the tribes.

U.S. Dragoons
In 1842 the U.S. Dragoons were assigned to the Sac and Fox Agency at Ottumwa, Iowa. Fort Des Moines was established in 1843 to await the removal of the Sauki and Meskwaki scheduled for 1845. During this time, the Dragoons had two main duties: 1) Stop intrusion by White settlers at the edge of the boundary between the United States and Sac & Fox, and equally important, 2) Stop war between the Sac & Fox and the Sioux. In 1845, the Dragoons presence as a U.S. military force made sure the Sac and Meskwaki were on their way to Kansas but in 1846 they were still finding and removing small Meskwaki groups in Iowa.

1842 Land Cession
The Meskwaki gave up the last of the lands conquered from other tribes during the previous century…a large region which included most of Iowa, Illinois, and parts of Missouri. Beginning with the Treaty of 1804 – the first one commissioned by the newly formed United States of America – the Tribe gradually lost land to the advancing American "frontier."

The Meskwaki were pushed westward, leaving behind Illinois-side Mississippi river village sites in 1829 such as Galena, Savanna, and Prairie Du Chien. Three years later a dubious treaty forced the Meskwaki out of their Iowa-side Mississippi river villages such as Dubuque, Bellevue, Clinton, Davenport, and Burlington.

In 1836, the Meskwaki were also forced to leave their eastern Iowa villages of present-day Iowa City and Cedar Rapids.

Then, in the end, the Treaty of 1842 left the Meskwaki no choice but to leave their Marengo, Oskaloosa, and Ottumwa villages to go to the Raccoon River and await further removal to Kansas by 1845.

Indian Removal Act of 1845
By order of Article III of the 1842 Treaty, the Sacs and Foxes were to remove from Iowa by October 11, 1845 to lands in Kansas assigned to them. The treaty terms allowed for a gradual relocation process of two steps taking place over a period of three years.

Theoretically, the first move in 1843 was to be to the western part of the ceded land past a boundary called "Painted Rocks" or "Red Rocks" and the second move was to be across the Iowa border into Kansas by the 1845 deadline. However, the actual removal process was not a smooth transition due to repeated treaty violations by the Meskwaki, who kept returning to old village sites in the eastern part of the state. These frequent boundary infractions disturbed the settlers and so the military was perpetually summoned to chase the Meskwaki back across the Painted Rocks line. These multiple confrontations reflected the tribe's strong desire to stay in this area as well as an equally strong dislike for the treaty terms.

The punctual, well-organized Sauks left for Kansas in two large groups on September 30th in 1845, a few weeks ahead of the October 11th deadline. In comparison, the Meskwaki hadn't even begun preparations to leave despite being bound by the same agreement. Government Agent John Beach threatened the Meskwaki with full military action, indicating that one way or another the tribe would be "gone" by October 11th. After antagonizing Agent Beach with delays, finally the Meskwaki march began on October 8th, but not in the same orderly manner as the Sauks. The Meskwaki rapidly dispersed in very small groups leaving every fifteen minutes apart. This chaotic form of departure made it very difficult for the military to keep track of who had left, which direction they headed, and how intact the groups stayed during the course of the journey. Agent Beach was EXTREMELY displeased to discover that by early winter of that same year, only one-fifth of the Meskwaki population's whereabouts were accountable at the Kansas "Osage River" reservation. Clearly, four-fifths of the Meskwaki were somewhere else…primarily, right back in Iowa.

Hardships in Kansas

Life was hard on the Kansas reservation. The land was poor quality and crops were nearly impossible to grow unlike the harvest from rich Iowa soil. Diseases such as cholera, small pox, and dysentery flourished in the densely populated reservations, transmitted by passing settlers on the nearby Sante Fe Trail. Hunting the dwindling buffalo herds meant increased competition with other Indian tribes confined to nearby reservations: tribes who the Meskwaki had no desire to form intertribal relations other than for purposes of war. With the superior war tactics honed through centuries of full-scale and bloody warfare, Meskwaki warriors overpowered the southern plains tribes such as the Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Arapaho, and Osage. In one particular well-documented instance, 80 Meskwaki hunters defeated a one thousand man force, inflicting heavy losses and ultimately earning cautious respect from the new neighbors.

Kansas Reservations, 1854

The "Sacs and Foxes of the Mississippi" were removed to a reservation in the Osage River area near present-day Ottawa, due south of the already existing "Sacs and Foxes of the Missouri" reservation near the Nebraska border. Surrounded by old Eastern "Fox Wars" enemies such as the Wyandots, Ottawas, Peorias, and also by new Plains enemies such as Comanches, Osage, and Kiowas, the unwelcome relocation was more complex than just simply not caring for the Kansas countryside.

The reservation itself was in present-day Franklin and Osage counties. The Meskwaki occupied the more remote northwestern half and the Sauk occupied the southeastern half which was closer to the Indian Agency (the agent's home, doctor, government buildings, etc.). As the Meskwaki gradually left for Iowa, the "Fox" population dwindled to the degree that the remaining numbers were absorbed by the Sauk.

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From http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/northamerica/sauk.html (unable to open 2/2012)

Note: This describes living conditions for the Sauk and Fox when they lived in Illinois near where the Rock River flows into the Mississippi, living conditions that likely changed very little when they moved to Tama County.

Daily Life: At Saukenuk or "River of the Rock" the Sauk and the Fox stayed to build their homes and plant their fields. There, in this rich valley the deer, buffalo, bear, and smaller game provided food and skins, which could be traded or made into clothing. Beaver and muskrat lived in the many streams, which were also filled with fish.

North of the valley there was a great source of lead. Since it was close to the surface it could be dug out easily. At first it was used to make ornaments, later white traders taught them how to make lead musket balls to use in their guns. Soon they traded lumps of lead for goods.
In the valley the soil was rich and fertile. Using the shoulder bone of a buffalo or deer, the women broke the land and turned over the soil. They grew corn, beans, squash, pumpkin and tobacco. Of all the crops corn was the most important. It could be boiled, roasted, or made into soup or dumplings. After the kernels were stripped from the cob it could be dried and pounded into meal or stored away for further use. When kernels were laid out on a hot rock they would pop into fluffy morsels. Corn provided its own seed for the next year's planting. As long as the Sauk and Fox had a good harvest of corn, they knew they would not go hungry. The Sauk women tilled the soil, raised the crops, gathered the harvest, prepared and stored the food and reared the children.

The mother was in charge of the family home and everything in it. If the mother belonged to the Sauk people then all of her children were Sauk. The women had an important part in tribal government. Unless the women approved a son could not take his father's place as a sacred clan chief. The men protected the home, the fields, and the tribal hunting grounds. They went into the forest and out on the plains to hunt for game that provided food and skins for clothing and for trade. The Sauk are known for their excellent ribbon work, a form of appliqué. They enjoyed finely decorated deerskin dresses, vests, and shirts.

The Sauk farmed in villages in the summer and went to hunting grounds in the winter. Their lodges were large bark-covered wigwams with rounded roofs that let the rain and snow roll off easily. Most lodges were forty to sixty feet long and had several families living in them. Each family had its own cooking fire in the center of the lodge. Sleeping benches covered with skins and blankets ran along the inside walls.

The Sauk lived in towns from April to October. When the harvest had been gathered and the geese began to fly south, families went into the forests to build huts where they lived during the winter hunting season. People too old and weak stayed in town. A supply of food was stored in bark-lined caches in the ground and strong young boys stayed behind.

Note: On February 20, 2012, Listened to a short piece on IPR explaining the differences between summer and winter wikiups. Summer wikiups were covered with bark to let the air flow through freely and winter wikiups were made of cattail nets to provide greater warmth.

Religion played an important part in their daily life. The Sauk believed that every person, animal, and thing had its own "manito", or guardian spirit. When a hunter killed a bear, a deer, a buffalo, or any animal he thanked the "manito" of the animal for the gift it was giving to the people. Children began learning the religion of their people at an early age. Boys were taught to fast and to keep holy vigils to bring their soul closer to the Great Spirit. When the boy was old enough he made a special vigil quest. The Great Spirit would show him his personal manito, which would stay with him the rest of his life. At that time, he chose his manhood name and began to collect the sacred things that would go into his medicine bag.

Although the Sauk were a peaceful people, sometimes they had to go to war to defend their hunting grounds or their towns. Neighboring tribes such as the Osage raided Sauk lands. The Sauk were noted for their courage, and they believed that every raid should be answered by a counter raid to uphold the honor of their people. When other tribes invaded Sauk lands, a council was called to decided what action to take. Often war parties were sent out to meet the enemy.

Warfare had its own rules of conduct. In war, a Sauk gained honor if he could count coup. That meant that he had touched an armed enemy and lived to tell about it. Counting coup earned a warrior the right to wear an eagle feather in his crest.

They lived happily and well in the valley of the Rock River. But with the coming of the first white people, they learned to use guns as well as bow and arrows, and to ride horses to hunt and to make war. Guns were brought to the Sauk by the white traders who offered them in exchange for furs and lead.

The Sauk and Fox culture is based upon respect for the life within themselves, their families, their community, and all of creation. The Creator gave this way of life to the Sauk and Fox people. The tribe is divided into clans, each with its own symbol,-- Bird, Fish, Bear, Potato, Deer, Beaver, Snow, and Wolf,-- are a few. Each tribe was governed by a council of sacred clan chiefs, a war chief, the head of families, and the warriors. The traditional manner of selecting chiefs and governing themselves was forcibly replaced by the United States. Appointees and a constitution patterned after the American government was formed.

Sauk and Fox governments, traditional and new, have been challenged with threats to the sovereignty of the nations over land resources and the peoples welfare. In 1832 Black Hawk defended the people's right to their homeland. Chief Keokuk complied with the U.S. demands to move west of the Missouri territory. In 1869 the Mokohoko band led by Chief Pashepaho fought to remain in Kansas until the late 1880's. Removal from the land from which the Woodland nations evolved has drastically affected the knowledge and practice of the tribe's language, traditions, original teachings, ceremonies, ways of life, and relationship to the natural world.

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Notes by a print of Chief Wa-Pel-La, Chief of the Mesquakees, 1836-1844, at the Cedar Rapids Art Museum:

The Musquakee, Mesquakie, or Meskwaki are of the Algonquian origin of the Eastern Woodlands area. Called "Renards" (The Fox) by the Freunch – the tribe's first Europeon contact was in 1666 – the Meskwaki purchased 80 acres in Tama County in 1857. Ten years later the U.S. finally began paying annuities to the Meskwaki of Iowa, an act that gave the Meskwaki a formal identify as the Sac and Fox of Iowa. Sac and Fox men usually shaved their heads in "mohawk" fashion with a single braid called a "scalplock" from the crown of the head – they wore caps made of otter fur, but in times of war – they would often wear a porcupine roach (head ornament) instead. Feathers, too, were often tied to the roach.

The Sac and Fox tribes originally used different colors and designs of face and body paintings, so that a Fox Indian and a Sac Indian looked quite different even though their clothing styles were otherwise the same. The Sac and Fox were farming people, growing corn, beans, and squash on agricultural plots on the outskirts of their villages.

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From the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History:
http://www.uiowa.edu/~nathist/exhibits/meskwaki.html

Note: See *The Iowa Hall Adventure: A Guide to the Exhibits*, 1985, in my Meskwaki folder for information on the general history of Native American history in Iowa. There is also a nice photo of their exhibit showing a wikiup made from cattail nets.

The Meskwaki diorama is a full-scale re-creation of a winter lodge, a dome-shaped, cattail mat-covered structure that was built in a protected area each year after the harvest. The Meskwaki called these lodges wickiups. When the French drove the Meskwaki from Wisconsin in the late seventeenth century, the tribe moved into eastern Iowa with their allies, the Sauk. The Meskwaki have been dedicated to maintaining their Iowa home. When the federal government tried to move them with the Sauk to a Kansas reservation, they resisted. Some settled with Pottawatomi Indians in southwestern Iowa in the 1840s, while others remained in central Iowa along the Iowa, Cedar and Skunk rivers. In 1856, an Iowa law allowed the Meskwaki to buy land in present-day Tama County, where today's Meskwaki Settlement is located. Meskwaki tradition and culture remain visible in activities like the annual August Pow-Wow, a celebration of the first corn harvest of the season that includes food, songs, arts and crafts, and colorful dances.The scene at the lodge suggests the broad range of activities in daily Meskwaki life during autumn in the 1840s. In the diorama's background, another winter lodge is being constructed. Beside the lodge, a Meskwaki woman stirs sumac in a brass kettle over a fire to make dye for a woven bag. Inside the structure, teaching and preparation for a Meskwaki ceremony take place, as a boy watches his grandfather carve a wooden bowl for use in a naming ceremony.The scene was created with help from a group of Meskwaki Indians from Tama, who provided advice during planning for the diorama. The taped narration accompanying the exhibit, which includes passages spoken in the Meskwaki language, was recorded by individuals from the present-day Tama settlement.

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From http://www.meskwaki.com/history.html:

In 1857 the Meskwaki purchase the first 80 acres in Tama County. Ten years later the U.S. finally began paying annuities to the Meskwaki in Iowa, an act that gave the Meskwaki a formal identity as the Sac & Fox of Iowa. The jurisdictional status was unclear since the tribe then had formal federal recognition with eligibility for BIA services but also had a continuing relationship with the State of Iowa due to the tribe's private ownership of land which was held in trust by the governor.

For the next 30 years the Meskwaki were virtually ignored by federal as well as state polices.

Subsequently, they lived a more independent lifestyle than other tribes confined to regular reservations that were strictly regimented by federal authority. To resolve this jurisdictional ambiguity, in 1896 the State of Iowa ceded to the Federal Government all jurisdiction over the Meskwaki.

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From "The Mesquakie Indian Settlement in 1905," by L. Edward Purcell, *The Palimpsest*. March/April, 1974:

Despite the fact that corn fields and livestock were rapidly occupying open land, the Mesquakies continued throughout most of the 1800s to follow their traditional cycle of summer farming and winter hunting. Roaming far from the Settlement, family groups hunted the disappearing game which provided food and clothing. They camped in the fields of the early white settlers and occasionally begged a hand-out. There was a remarkable tolerance for the Mesquakies among the growing white population of the state. Even during the panic years of the so-called Spirit Lake Massacre and the Great Sioux Uprising, the Mesquakies were left in peace. By 1905 and Duren Ward's visit, the tribe was firmly rooted.

From http://www.msswarriors.org/history/MeskinteractiveCD1/Pages/Culture/SettlementHomePage.htm:

L. Edward Purcell wrote about Duren H. Ward's expedition to the Settlement in the summer of 1905.

On July 13, 1857, the Meskwaki purchased their first 80 acres in Tama County. A small band gathered in a summer village on the west bank of the Iowa River, but they scattered in all directions to their winter camps.

Every year between 1857 and 1866, different groups of Meskwaki returned to the Settlement in Tama County, with the majority coming to the area after 1862. The tribe traded 130 trees to obtain funds to purchase another parcel of 40 acres in January 1867.

In 1867, the United States government finally allowed the Meskwaki living in Iowa to receive federal annuity payments for the first time in ten years. By generating income through trapping and by accumulating annuity payments, the tribe was able to purchase additional land between 1867 and 1901.

This expanded the Meskwaki Settlement to almost 3,000 acres. The Settlement stayed the same until 1987, and this area is commonly referred to the "Old Settlement." The Lincoln Highway (old Highway 30) ran through the original 80 acres, located on the southern end of the lands.

In 1987, the Meskwaki purchased more land, expanding their holdings to 7,054 acres. Although the tribe's summer village and housing were originally built on river bottom land or along the Iowa River Valley, the tribe gradually acquired land on higher ground toward the north, closer to the relocated Highway 30.

Once the tribe relocated away from the flood-prone areas, the Meskwaki secured housing improvements and other modern amenities. Tribal activities at the Settlement have shifted to the north, where the casino, high school, and newer housing are situated. Pow-wow celebrations continue to be held on traditional grounds to the south.

Click here to see a map showing how the Meskwaki acquired land in Tama County, Iowa.

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From "Little Stories of Pioneer Days" by Nehemias Tjernagel in *The Story City Herald*, October 26, 1922:

Note: The following event took place when Endre Christianson (1834-1922) and other Norwegian immigrants moved from the Fox River Norwegian Settlement southwest of Chicago to central Iowa. Endre settled on a farm in southern Hamilton County, in Section 28, Scott Township.

In the year 1858, Endre crossed the prairies from Illinois to Iowa in the company of his mother, his two sisters, Helen (married Haaver Thorson) and Bertha (married Knute Nelson, soldier), also Erick and Knut Egland and Mr. Øino. They drove oxen and it took them three weeks to make the trip. Lars Henryson, Paul Thompson, Tjeran Halsnes, Christen Skarhaug, Mons Grove and others came at the same time, but Endre's party preferred to travel separately and kept themselves a few miles ahead of the others during the whole journey. It rained much during the trip and they had great trouble in fording swollen streams and crossing make-shift bridges.

At the Indian reservation near Tama, where they camped, they were joined by 3 grocery haulers who had four oxen with two bulls in lead on each wagon. In the evening Endre and others, together with the grocery haulers, went over to the river to explore into the Indian domiciles there. In the edge of the timber they were met by some ferocious Indian dogs which sent them scurrying back, all except the oldest groceryman who succeeded in escaping the fangs of the canines and whistled for the others to return. This they did and were met face to face with some Indian braves who escorted them to a place in the deep timber where they were holding a dance and pow-wow. The visitors were invited to seat themselves on straw mats and witness the performances. While sitting thus one of the dancers snatched Endre's hat off his head and he feared he had seen the last of it and would be obliged to go bareheaded the rest of the jouney. His companions laughed at him, but it was his turn to laugh when the whirling dancers dexteriously picked off the hats of the rest of the party. They drew rapidly away with them as if to hide them, but suddenly returned them as deftly and unexpectedly as they had removed them.

While watching the Indians in their dancing contortions the head grocer suddenly divested himself of his hampering garb, jumped into the ring and joined the dancers. This gave them great glee, the squaws especially. He took one on each arm, swung them around, and hoisted himself to their shoulders and performed many other antics for their entertainment. Suddenly a stentorian call came from out of the woods and as a mist, quietly as a whisper, the vast throng faded out of sight and our party was left utterly bewildered and alone. The chief had spoken, and the merriment was over for the night.

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Ames Historical Society: http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/:

Note: This site contains old Iowa maps. On an 1862 map, the settlement is marked "Indian T" and on the 1864 map it is "Indian Village." Norwegian immigrants heading for the Northern Settlement near Story City left the main road at Marengo and followed a route that took them by the Meskwaki Settlement to Marietta in western Marshall County and to Nevada in Story County.

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See Chapter II, "The Transients," in Julian E. McFarland's *A History of the Pioneer Era on the Iowa Prairies*, 1969, for a discussion of Native American history as it relates to central Iowa. In addition to being very interested in the pioneer history of central Iowa, McFarland was also obviously very interested in Native American history.

Note: While the focus of this book is Story County, McFarland made a thorough study of the histories of the nearby counties to gain a fuller understanding of Story County, and he has some excellent maps in the back of the book showing the route of the Dragoons in 1835, locations of first settlements, and place names and travel routes prior to 1860. McFarland's book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the regional history of central Iowa. Along with his father and brother, McFarland established the McFarland Clinic in Ames in 1939.

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Information about the Skunk River:

"The Skunk River" in *Iowa: The River of Her Valleys* by William J. Peterson, 1941.

See Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skunk_River:

Note: This Web site includes a map showing the South Skunk River with its headwaters in Hamilton County and the North Skunk river with its headwaters in Marshall County. It also shows where they join together in Keokuk County and flow into the Mississippi River below Burlington, Iowa.

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Office of the State Archaeologist, Iowa City
http://www.uiowa.edu/~osa/
Office of the State Archaeologist
700 South Clinton Street Building
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA 52242-1030
Phone: 319-384-0732

Note: On February 29, 2012, Contacted their office regarding information received in 1993 about archaeological sites in Story County. Spoke with the state archaeologist, John Doershuk, who informed me they started a state-wide project in 2004 to collect information similar to what I have been collecting. When I finish this document, need to send it to them and they will check it against their list and get back to me and to Johnathan Buffalo at the Meskwaki Settlement.

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From *Stalking The Skunk* by David M. Gradwohl and Nancy M. Osborn, 1972:

p. 12: Some pioneer accounts tell of Indians who seasonally inhabited the northern Skunk drainage. N. Tjernagel wrote of seeing a camp of "fully a hundred" Indians on the Skunk near Story City when he was a boy (Tjernagel 1931: 368). Mrs. Henry Schomaker, whose grandfather homesteaded land on Bear Creek, said her father recalls that Indians camped along that stream each fall and spring "with their red blankets and ponies" and came to the house upon occasion to ask for food. These Native Americans were probably Mesquakies (Sauk and Fox) and possibily some Pottawattomies….By that time the Mesquakies had purchased back some of their previously-ceded lands along the Iowa River in Tama County. Donald Wanatee, a member of the present Mesquakie Settlement, has stated that the Mesquakie probably continued to hunt along the upper Skunk River until the first decade of the 20th century (personal communication).

p. 119: One additional specimen--a human calvarium--found along the Skunk River, downstream from the proposed dam, is particularly interesting considering the fact that we have so far not located any aboriginal burial mounds or cemeteries….

Note: See the entry from Amos Twedt in the northern Story County section below. He claims there were Indian burial mounds in Section 3, Milford Township, by a ravine in the northwest quarter of the section.

p. 124: Documentary accounts of Native Americans in the region at the time of White contact are very sketchy, and the archaeological evidence so far is entirely lacking. Considering the ethnohistory of Iowa as discussed by M. Mott (1938) one might look for evidence of the Ioway who were displaced by the Fox and the Sauk, but no such indications are at hand. By the time of the first real settlement of the area by Euro-Americans in the late 1840's and 1850's, most of the Mesquakies (or Fox) and the Sauk had been removed to Kansas. Some Mesquakies, however, remained in Iowa on land they purchased along the Iowa River. As discussed in a previous section, historic accounts and the folk memory regarding Indians in the area during the late 19th century probably refer to those Mesquakie who came up the Skunk valley on hunting expeditions from their settlement in Tama County.

Letter to the Editor published in *The Story City Herald*, March 21, 2007

Dear Editor:

The "Stalking the Skunk" program at the Bertha Bartlett Library on March 12, 2007, presented by David Gradwohl, retired professor of archaeology from Iowa State University, drew an overflowing crowd eager to learn about early life along the Skunk River. Dr. Gradwohl discussed research conducted in the late 1960s when a proposed reservoir north of Ames was being considered.

Dr. Gradwohl and his students surveyed over 50 sites between Ames and Story City including sites along the creeks that flow into it – Squaw Creek, Long Dick Creek, and Bear Creek.

Through slides showing the research methods used and the many artifacts found, the audience learned that life was abundant along the Skunk River during pre-historic times.

Although Dr. Gradwohl did not discover evidence of permanent settlement, native people used the Skunk for hunting, fishing, and trapping. When asked about material evidence showing more recent Native American activity along the Skunk, Dr. Gradwohl said none was found, but one of his students, a Mesquakie man from the Tama Settlement, told him his ancestors visited the Skunk River to collect reeds for making mats.

Dr. Gradwohl also said that when his students asked residents living by the Skunk River if they had found artifacts, they often heard stories about early settler contact with Native Americans. He said he wished he had been able to interest one of his students in an oral history project to collect these stories.

It is not too late to collect these stories! As someone who is interested in the early history of central Iowa, I would enjoy collecting your stories and assembling them into a booklet for the library and historical society. I already have some stories from county history books and local newspapers, but the important task today is to capture the family stories that still exist in our oral history. Please send your story to me at 509 NE Stone Valley Dr., Ankeny, IA 50021 or atwedt@aol.com.

Arlen Twedt, Coordinator
Central Iowa Norwegian Project
http://genloc.com/NorStory/

Note: Received one response, a letter from Jack Frandsen about stories told to him by Ole Monsen (see northern Story County section below).

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February 20, 2012: Listened to a program on IPR, "The Meskwaki Tribe: Past, Present, and Future," a rebroadcast of a program on Charity Nebbe's "Talk of Iowa" program (could not find the date when it was first aired). Her guests were:

Christine Black-Cloud Garcia, Ex. Director of the Meskwaki Tribe
Larry Lasley, Economic Development Director
Suzan Buffalo, Clerk of Tribal Court
Johnathan Buffalo, Meskwaki Historic Preservation Director
Stephanie Snow, Historical Preservation Dep't Assistant.

The Meskwaki purchased their first 80 acres in Tama County in 1857, the year after the Iowa Legislature passed a law permitting them to buy land in Iowa. Today, the settlement is 7,000 acres with 850 Meskwaki living on the settlement and a total tribal population of 1,300.
Note: See other notes I made from the program in my Meskwaki folder.

Then found another short program, "Meskwaki Winter Camps & Wikiups," that Johnathan Buffalo did for the Iowa Arts Council that was aired on IPR on February 6, 2010. It helped me better understand the purpose of the winter camps and the differences in the summer wikiups along the Iowa River (made from bark) and the wikiups covered with cattail nets that they lived in during the winter when they hunted and trapped along streams flowing into the Cedar, Iowa, and other major rivers.

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Meskwaki Cultural Center & Museum (as of February 21, 2012):
http://www.meskwaki.org/HistPres.html
Office Hours: Monday thru Friday, 8-4:30
Phone: 641-484-3185
Mailing address: 349 Meskwaki Road, Tama, IA 52339

Staff: Johnathan Buffalo, Historic Preservation Director
Stephanie Snow, Historic Preservation Assistant
Betty Buffalo, Historic Preservation receptionist

Note: Can contact the Historic Preservation Department for history questions.

February 21, 2012: Called Johnathan Buffalo to see if they had any information at the center on winter camps along the Skunk River. He said they do not, but found out he is working on documenting winter camp locations east of Tama.

Learned the following additional information about their winter camps (for more information see notes I made from Johnathan's radio program on "Winter Camps & Wikiups" in my Meskwaki folder):

1. Families had their own areas for hunting and trapping that other families honored unless invited to hunt and trap in the area. His family hunted and trapped near Marengo.

2. The western boundary of their hunting and trapping area extended to a place called the ridge where the rivers began flowing into the Missouri, but Johnathan did not have any knowledge of winter camping areas west of the Skunk River.

3. Part of the agreement with the U.S. Government was that they could ride trains free and that the government would make a depot for them, if necessary, so after rail lines came through central Iowa they loaded their supplies, horses, etc. and rode in a box car to their winter camping areas. Their supplies included cattail nets used to cover their wikiups so whatever reed collecting they did must have been for additional wikiups or to replace old cattail nets.

4. We briefly discussed when they might have started taking the train from Tama to Story County, but did not come to any conclusion. After looking at a map later, however, it appears they could have started doing this as early as 1864-65 when the Chicago Northwestern arrived in Nevada and Ames.

I asked Johnathan if he has spoken at the Ames Historical Society's lecture series and he has not, but that it was okay to suggest him as a presenter. When I told him about the information I have been collecting on the Meskwaki, he wanted to know if I was interested in writing an article. I told him I had to finish my history of Norwegian settlement first, but that I would send him my collection of pioneer references to Meskwaki camping along the Skunk River.

Northern Settlement References (southern Hamilton County)

This compilation of pioneer references of Meskwaki along the Upper South Skunk River begins at Goose Lake and Little Wall Lake, favorite places for Meskwaki to gather cattail reeds for making nets used to cover their winter wikiups. The lakes are located near Jewell, a town on the northern border of the so-called Northern Norwegian Settlement.

Approximately seven miles southeast of Jewell is the unincorporated town of Christytown, another Meskwaki camp location about which much has been written by A. M. Henderson (1872-1950) who lived across the road from their campsite location and the Tjernagel brothers, Peder (1865-1932) and Nehemias (1868-1958), who lived a mile away. Their descriptions of the Meskwaki provide an appropriate beginning to this listing of Meskwaki camp locations along the Upper South Skunk River.

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From *The History of Hamilton County, Iowa, 1985*. p. 73:

Sloughs: The Skunk River flows along the entire east side of Lyon Township. It enters at Rose Grove, flows southeast through Lakin's Grove and to just west of Ellsworth. It was called the Cha-Ca-Qua by the Sac and Fox Indians. This meant a rank, offensive odor, the smell of wild onions that grew along its banks. To the early day traveler, the Skunk was famous, or rather infamous, for its mud and quick sand bottoms. The pioneers handed down many tales of the difficulties encountered in working wagons and stagecoaches out of the mud. From the source of the river to Rose Grove, there is no timber. The timber area starts at Rose Grove.

Goose Lake, located just east of Jewell and north of Highway 175, was called "The Lake with the island in the middle" by the Indians. They gathered reeds and rushes from the marsh for basket weaving. They rode the train from Tama and continued this practice until the late 30s. William Anderson played ball with some of the Indian boys while their mothers worked. The island in the lake had a colony of night heron. Snakes were common. Goose Lake is now the property of the Gem Gun Club of Ames.

Lake Cairo or Mud Lake was a lake of about 1,800 acres located about 3 1/2 miles northwest of Jewell. It was the home of many fish as well as wildlife such as geese, ducks, beavers, muskrats, and wolves. Many stories have been told about the lake in early days, that it was a setting for Indian Wars as well as peaceful hunting and fishing by the Indians. A battle took place in the 1830s on the borders of Mud Lake, and Big Bear, a Mesquakie chief, was killed.

Location Information: Goose Lake is in Section 27, Lyon Township and Lake Cairo covered most of Sections 18 & 19, Lyon Township, and small portions of adjacent sections.

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References related to a Meskwaki campsite on the north side of Little Wall Lake:

From Mrs. K. P. Espe's pioneer story in *The Jewell Gem, 1881-1981*, p. 73:

During their first year here [1879] Indians were frequent visitors; there were many of them staying at Little Wall Lake and at Challe's Grove, and they roamed over the country stealing a little, begging a lot. Asked if she were not frightened when Indians came, Mrs. Espe remarked that in those days "I had to be brave." "Usually," she said, "when the Indians came begging we would give them something to eat and they would go on and make no trouble." Mrs. Espe told of a big white Eskimo dog that they had then upon which she relied a great deal for protection.

Location Information (87-24-33): The K. P. Espe family settled in the northeast quarter of Section 33, Lyon Township, in 1879, land that is now within the city limits of Jewell. Little Wall Lake was two two miles south of their farmstead.

Location Information (86-24-10): Two-thirds of Little Wall Lake is in Section 9 & 10, Ellsworth Township, and the remaining portion of the lake is on the south side of these sections in Section 15 & 16. The campsite was mostly likely in the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 10, Ellsworth Township, in or near a place known as Challe's Grove.

Conversation with Stan Valde on November 27, 2011: Stan remembers his grandmother telling about seeing Indians collecting reeds on Wall Lake from her country school on the north side of the lake. This would have been after 1900. He also said the Indians camped in a grove near there, but I do not remember the name of the grove.

February 20, 2012: Listened to a "Talk of Iowa" IPR program this morning about the Meskwaki Tribe and to another short piece I found about "Winter Camps and Wikiups" by Johnathan Buffalo which reminded me of the conversation I had with Stan last year about his mother seeing Indians picking reeds on Little Wall Lake. Called Stan to discuss his mother's memories again.

His mother was born in 1899, so her memories are from 1905 and later. The school she attended was the Maland School (southwest corner of Section 3, Ellsworth Township) about two miles south of Jewell. From the school house, it is only one-fourth mile to the northern most part of the lake. His mother lived nearby so she remembered seeing Meskwaki picking cattail reeds in the fall from her school and from where she lived. While the Meskwaki picked cattails, they camped in Challe's Grove which looks like it would have been right by the northern end of the lake, too, in the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 10. Stan said there is a creek that flows into the lake near there and this is likely where the Indians got their water.

Stan remembers the cattails being very tall, just like what Johnathan Buffalo said were needed to make cattail nets for winter wikiups. Stan doesn't remember his mother saying if the Meskwaki stayed there all winter, only seeing them pick cattails in the fall, but he said there were lots of muskrats in the lake, so it is likely at least some of the Meskwaki stayed near the lake during the winter to trap and hunt. He also said his mother was afraid of the Indians, so he doesn't think she had any contact with them while they were camped by the lake.

February 24, 2012: Stan called to say his sister Ruth remembered their mother's memories the same way he did.

Location Information (86-24-10): The campsite was mostly likely in the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 10, Ellsworth Township, in or near a grove called Challe's Grove.

Information from Bill Haglund from Waukee, Iowa, who I met at the state historical library:

September 8, 2008 - Sent Bill a letter requesting a short paragraph about what he remembers his grandmother telling him about observing Indians by Little Wall Lake when she was attending school.

Received September 10, 2008: Arlen: ...The story to which you refer was my grandmother's experiences with the Indians at Little Wall Lake. I don't know much, except what was told by my mother. When my grandmother was just a little girl, they lived very near Wall Lake (near the intersections of Highway 175 and Highway 69 south of Jewell) and she attended an old log cabin-type schoolhouse at Little Wall Lake. That would have been in the 1905-1908 time period, I would guess. It was a one-room school and when the Indians would come down to Little Wall Lake to fetch water, the teacher would call the school children to a window where they could watch. That's about all I know of that experience.

Note: Bill's email states his grandmother was Hattie Hildahl who married Charles Knox. Found a Henry Hildahl on 1900 Census, age 46, who emigrated in 1881, living close to Malands with wife and children Sarah 11 and Martha 9, but did not find a Hattie on subsequent censuses. However, did find Hattie Hildahl, born July 1898, using ancestry.com, so her memories would have been from ca. 1903 or later.

Location Information (86-24-10): The campsite was mostly likely in the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 10, Ellsworth Township, in or near a grove called Challe's Grove.

From "Early History of Randall," a handwritten history I found at the Kendall Young Library in Webster. There is no author or date on the 50-page history and the librarians did not know who wrote it. The pages are not numbered either, but on the fourth page it states:

"Indians from the Tama reservation emigrated to Wall Lake three and one half miles north of Randall to hunt, trap, fish and gather rushes to build homes. They would have tentimes (*sic*) camp along Skunk River."

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References related to a Meskwai campsite three miles northeast of Story City between the east bank of the Skunk River in Section 25, Ellsworth Township, and Christytown Road, a road running between Section 25 and Section 30, Scott Township:

From A. M. Henderson's "My Years in Story County," *Annals of Iowa*, 1951, 30:604-616:

Note: A. M. Henderson was born in 1872, died in 1950.

We had no footprints of the Indian nor hoof-marks of the buffalo to point to within my memory. I do, however, remember frequent Indian invasions, but of a friendly nature.

Every spring and fall representatives from the Sac and Fox tribe of the Tama Indian Reservation pitched their tents on the banks of the Skunk river across the road from our home. Their sole objective seemed to be fishing, trapping and hunting. The Indian name for skunk is seganku, so to them they were camping on the banks of the Seganku.

Location Information (86-24-25): The Henderson farmstead was on the west side of Section 30, Scott Township, and only about a half a mile from the Skunk River, so the campsite must have been in Section 25, Ellsworth Township.

From "A Medley Of Ye Olde Days As Told By A. M. Henderson" by A. M. Henderson in *The Story City Herald 1940 Anniversary Number*, p.35:

Dear Editor:

But a short week ago I returned from a visit at Quincy, Ill., down on the banks of the faithful Mississippi, on the borderline of Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn's domains, from where my return route took me via the Sac and Fox Indian Reservation in Tama county, this state.

On my return home, I found awaiting in my mail box, your invitation to serve as a contributor to your proposed Special Issue of the Herald, soon to be off the press.

The phrase "old time reminiscences" in your invitation is underscored.

To me this seemed quite a coincidence, for my passing of the Indian Reservation only short hours before had arroused in me many memories of the yesteryears.

Back in the late 70's and early 80's—before I had reached my 'teens—these genuine Americans made, in large numbers, semi-annal visits to their favorite camping spot within a "stone's throw" of my boyhood home.

They pitched their tents every spring and autumn on the banks of Skunk river, about three miles north of here, or as they called it in their own language "Chicauqua," the Indian name for skunk. They came there for fishing, hunting, and trapping, in which they proved themselves to be very adept.

They always came with substantial herds of Indian ponies, ostensibly for sale or trade, but to the best of my recollection, they never parted with an animal during these sojourns. Well, their posterity is still down on the same reservation, the land of no foreclosures and no deliquent taxes, and I am at times moved to ask if they are not living under a greater degree of contentment than we are?

From "Rasmus Sheldall's Pioneer Story" as recorded by Nehemias Tjernagel, *The Story City Herald,* June 8, 1922:

…At one time three hundred Indians camped near the Sheldall homestead. They gave the settlers no particular trouble, but the game in the neighborhood was all but exterminated while the red-skins tarried.…

Location Information (86-24-25): The Sheldall farmstead was located on the west side of the northwest quarter of Section 31, Scott Township, so Rasmus (1847-1926) in referring to the same campsite as A. M. Henderson above, a campsite in Section 25, Ellsworth Township.

From "History of the Sheldall School and School-house" by Nehemias Tjernagel, *The Story City Herald*, April 20, 1922:

Note: An almost identical description of this event was also published in "The Sheldall School" by Nehemias Tjernagel, *Palimpsest*, September 1931, p. 368:

Once we took a half-holiday to visit an Indian camp in the woods. There must have been as many as 100 Indians, men, women and children, in the band. We watched them make camp, watched them as they roasted their skunk-sirloin over the fire, saw them feed their babies and put them to sleep papoose fashion, heard the little ones cry and wondered why they used the same cry-language that white babies do, etc., etc. We looked till we couldn't look any more, and the Indians did not mind us any. They just went quietly on with their business of doing little, or nothing, and liked it best of all if they might remain unnoticed. They did not appear to be the least bit curious about us, but they saw everything that was transpiring about them, yet without seeming to see.

Location Information (86-24-25): Nehemias grew up on a farmstead on the south side of Section 30, Scott Township, about a mile from the Skunk River. The Sheldall School House was located across the road and not far from the entrance to his parents' farmstead, and the campsite was in Section 25, Ellsworth Township.

From "A history of Boe Cemetery" by Mrs. Albert (Sarah) Holt, *The Story City Herald*, May 27, 1981:

— "For a number of years the Elim Lutheran Church stood on the land which is now part of the Gabrielson property. It was moved to Randall in 1889. North of this church, along the Skunk River, was an Indian camp. Numerous stories were told of the camp and of hearing that at times when there was a burial at the cemetery, they would encounter Indians peering at them from the trees surrounding the cemetery. The tribe was not hostile and never caused any incidents, but the people were often apprehensive and made a quick burial and hurried retreat."

Location Information (86-24-25): Boe Cemetery is adjacent to the west bank of Skunk River in Section 36, Ellsworth Township, next to a fording area, so the camp site Sarah Holt is referring to is the campsite beside the east bank of the Skunk River in Section 25, Ellsworth Township.

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Other references to Meskwaki most likely camped in Section 25, Ellsworth Townhip:

From "A Pioneer Biography of Nels Peterson Okland" as recorded by Nehemias Tjernagel, *The Story City Herald*, May 18, 1922:

…Big bands of Indians would often invade this neck of the woods and find isolated camping-places in the unusually dense timber. Nels often had friendly encounters with them, and on no occasion did they molest him….
Location Information (86-24-21): The Oakland farmstead was in the northeast quarter of the north east quarter of Section 21, Ellsworth Township, about two miles west of the river.

From a family history of Knute and Eli Nelson who moved to Hamilton County in 1862:

"Indians were still plentiful on the wide prairies. They would come in groups, slinking around the buildings. When it seemed safe to do so, they approached the house, opened the door, and walked in.

"Certainly, it was not reassuring to Eli to entertain such visitors. The Indians were not bashful about making their wants known. It was usually tobacco and sugar they demanded. They did not leave until they were doublly sure that they had gotten all the tobacco and sugar that Eli had. Then they made their way over the hills to their own haunts which were probably somewhere along the wooded Skunk River, which was only a couple of miles away. Grandma Nelson must have been greatly relieved to have them go their way. She was often alone with the children while Grandpa was away working to make a living for his family. Such experiences were repeated again and again."

Location Information (86-23-17): The Nelson farmstead was in the northeast quarter of the north east quarter of Section 17, Scott Township, about three miles east of the river.

From Jesse W. Lee's *History of Hamilton County, Iowa*, 1912, pp. 401-404:

Oliff B. Olson, who owns and operates forty acres of well improved land in Ellsworth township, is one of Hamilton county's pioneers but a native of Illinois, his birth having occurred in La Salle county, that state, on the 13th of October, 1851. He is a son of Lars. B. and Uber Olson, natives of Norway. The father was born on the 29th of September, 1806, and the mother on June 21, 1829. It required six months for the former to make his first journey to America, a trip which can now be made in less than that many days. Having decided after two years of residence in the United States to locate here permanently, he went back to Norway for his bride. Upon his return he settled in La Salle county, Illinois, residing there until June, 1856, when he removed with his family to Hamilton county, Iowa, locating on a farm in Ellsworth township. They made the journey from Illinois in an emigrant wagon, as there were but few railroads west of the Mississippi at that time. The Indians still inhabited the forest, and although they were near neighbors and frequent visitors, never caused any trouble. There were but few white settlements and these were scattered along the river, and where today are highly cultivated farms and thriving towns, stretched miles of unbroken prairie....

Location Information (86-24-36): The Lars B. Olson farmstead was in the west one-half of the northeast quarter of Section 36, Ellsworth Township, about one-half mile west of the river.

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From the Kendall Young Library, Webster City, Iowa:

Sent to "Ask a Librarian" at the Kendall Young Library on February 25, 2012: As part of my research on the central Iowa Norwegians, I have been collecting references to the presence of Indians along the Skunk. Recently, I talked with Johnathan Buffalo at the Meskwaki Settlement to see if they had any information about Meskwaki winter camp locations along the Skunk, and they do not. I told him I would send him a list of the locations I have been able to document. I know you have some excellent vertifical file information created by one or your former librarians. Did she collect information about Indians, too?

Note: March 12, 2012: Had not receive a response to this request so called and spoke with the reference librarian. They do not have a folder in their vertifical file on this topic, so any information they have about about Indians would be in their general Hamilton County vertical file or in the county histories. Have already reviewed the county histories and decided not to review the vertical files at this time.

Note: Later in March, received information regarding my February 25, 2012, request, but it did not contain any specific information about Meskwaki hunting and trapping along the Skunk River.

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The following references concern Hamilton County and the Spirit Lake Massacre in 1857:

From Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirit_Lake_Massacre:

The Spirit Lake Massacre (March 8–12, 1857) was an attack by a *Wahpetuke* band of Santee Sioux on scattered Iowa frontier settlements during a severe winter. Suffering a shortage of food, the renegade chief Inkpaduta (Scarlet Point) led 14 Sioux against the settlements near Okoboji and Spirit lakes in the northwestern territory of Iowa near the Minnesota border. The Sioux killed 35-40 settlers in their scattered holdings, took four young women captive, and headed north. The youngest captive, Abbie Gardner, was kept a few months before being ransomed in early summer. It was the last Native American attack on settlers in Iowa, but the events increased tensions between the Sioux and settlers in the Minnesota Territory.

From "Indian Territory - History of Our County before Statehood" by Martin E. Nass:
http://iagenweb.org/hamilton/IndianTerritory.htm

This area was occupied by four different Indian tribes. The Ioway tribe, for whom Albert Lea named our territory, occupied mostly the banks of the Des Moines River to the south. The Sioux tribe was located to the north, the Sac and Fox tribes living in the southern part of our county. The Sioux were very warlike and constantly fought with the Sac and Fox. To effect a peace in the area, the government drew a line that ran to the north of our counties. It was called the "Neutral Line." The Sioux were to stay north of the line, the Sac and Fox to the south. This line was drawn in 1825. In 1830 two more lines were drawn, one 20 miles north of the Neutral line, the other 20 miles south of the line. This area was called the "Neutral Strip." The Indians were paid 3 cents per acre for this land.

In 1835 Major Kearney and a company of Dragoons were sent to the area to scout, map, and try to get the Indians to live in peace. As they traveled up the Des Moines River, they took an unnamed fork along a tributary to the east. This was named the Boone River to honor Capt. Nathan Boone, the 10th child of Daniel Boone, and a member of the expedition. Lt. Albert Lea, another member of the party was the first to label and call this area Ioway.

Note: Remainder of this article mainly devoted to the Henry Lott incident that took place in Boone County.

From "Little Stories of Pioneer Days" by Nehemias Tjernagel in *The Story City Herald*, October 26, 1922:

Mr. Christenson was a good story-teller. Many a time have I listened with much interest to his narratives, but have preserved, alas, but too little. His stories of trips to distant towns for provisions, of horse thieves, prairie fires, of the many peculiar characters among the earliest settlers, all have gone a glimmering and my memory refuses to divulge the record thereof. Will attempt to give a little sketch of the Indians as told by Endre.

It was during the Indian uprisings when occurred the Spirit Lake massacre, that the following transpired. On a Sunday when Endre was reading a religious text to his family, his aged mother suddenly said, "Look at all the cattle!" Her vision was at fault, for it proved that what she saw was an endless array of Indian warriors and not droves of cattle. They came in three files quite a little distance apart, the center file heading straight for the house. There were a few pony riders who rode back and forth between the lines as if giving orders. Naturally, the Christensons were alarmed, and left the house quickly so as to get away from the oncoming hordes. They hurried toward Store Per's place, Endre grabbing one child and Mr. Hetletvedt, a soldier and Mrs. Christen's brother, the other. On the way they met Mr. Keefe, who later sold out to Rasmus Eide, who told them not to be afraid as he didn't think the warriors would hurt anyone while on the march. They kept on filing by from two o'clock in the afternoon till sundown. Endre states that it was a sight never to be forgotten as he watched the multicolored pageant of the prairies as it wound in and out among the hills as far as the eye could reach. He judged that there must have been thousands of the point-bedaubed, feather-be-decked braves in the vast company. There were a few belated stragglers in the rear and these seemed quite young and were crying. Imagine an Indian warrior shedding tears! Mr. Keefe spoke to them but they would not answer. Evidently, the strenous gait had been to much for them and they were now heart-broken because they were likely to miss the anticipated fray.

Endre knew one of the victims at Spirit Lake. The family had been warned of the impending danger, but they did not like to leave their home. The consequence was that the husband was killed a little ways from the house. The wife was seized and stripped, and had to look upon the slaughter of her baby. She found an opportunity to hide in the tall grass and thus escaped.

Location Information (86-23-20): The Christenson farmstead was in the west one-half of the southeast quarter of Section 20, Scott Township, about two miles east of the river.

From "A Pioneer Story" by P. G. Tjernagel, *The Story City Herald*, February 20, 1930:

…"In the year 1862, during the Indian outbreaks at Spirit Lake, New Ulm, Mankato and other places, a large band of Sacs and Foxes, the braves in war paint, camped on a hill near Weltha's dwelling. His neighbors were paralized with fear. He spoke to them reassuringly of his many experiences with the red men and admonished them to be trustful as "God reigns and holds His protecting hand over us." Whereupon he said he would go and have a little palaver with the chief and seek to learn what their intentions were. He did so and, without difficulty, was admitted into the presence of the chief who quietly explained that they were on the warpath, that they expected to join the Sioux Indians in Minnesota and, finally, that at sunrise they would depart having no thought of harming Weltha or his neighbors."

Location Information (86-23-30): Osmund Weltha's 80-acre farm was in the northeast quarter of Section 30, Scott Township, so it is assumed the campsite was in this section.

From "Pioneer Animal Lore" by Nehemias Tjernagel in *Annals of Iowa*, April 1953, pp. 609-610:

Sometimes lengthy horseback journeys were taken as, for instance, the one by Joe Anderson and his brother during the time of the Spirit Lake Massacre. Rasmus Sheldall related that during this Indian uprising there was a strong sentiment at Story City in favor of fortifying the larger buildings in case of attack, but nothing came of it. Rasmus [Sheldall] recalled that Joe and his brother rode their horses a considerable distance northwards to inquire into the war rumors, so as to give the settlers warning in case of possible danger of attack or molestation of any kind. Donning Indian garb for reasons best known to himself, Joe narrowly escaped being shot by his own brother who, unknowing as to his change of dress, mistook him for a redskin.

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From "Tragedies and Near-Tragedies of Pioneer Days," by Nehemias Tjernagel, *The Story City Herald*, May 3 & 10, 1923:

We often wonder why the Indians are so slow to adopt the white man's ways, but we do not always stop to consider the cause. In the first place, Indian traits and characteristics revolve about the traditional life in the open, the merry chase, the rivalry amongst hostile tribes, and the worshipful dance and pow-wow. To change the attitude of life of a people so set in their ways and customs, and who by right of possession were "Lords of all they surveyed," besides being wise to justice and fair play, to apostles of love and magnanimity and not human ghouls of unscrupulousness and greed when we note how kindly John Eliot (missionary), Columbus, and other explorers were received at first, we can only wonder at the toleration of the natives towards these unknown people moving with so much assurance in their midst. Had the new arrivals been bent on cooperation instead of conquest, as was so often the case, the story of the Indians could have been differently told. Seeing, as they did, the misuses of civilization constantly paraded before their eyes; the oft-repeated mockery of professed but empty Christianity, hence void of its real power and blessings; the ugly lust for gold acquired at any price; the brutal, unchaste lives of many all tended to cause suspicion, make them shrink into themselves, cling to their own, and hold aloof from the new order of things. Their original trust turned to abhorrence and hate, when came craftily planned reprisals, often resulting in grief to the innocent as well as guilty; but finding themselves helpless before the numerous, well-armed invaders, they drifted into a resentful, stubborn apathy with which we now find it exceedingly difficult to cope. Having nursed their grudges for so long, they have weakened in spirit, and have lost much of their former pride and stamina, leaving them ambitionless and indifferent. It seems somewhat paradoxical when we note the haughty, independent nature of the Indian now inclining to dependence, yea begary, midst the scenes of his one time dominance. But they have not forgotten, and though subdued, their resentment still smolders and will perhaps continue to do so as long as there is an Indian left. However, if they can be reached through real Christianity, wrought by the inspired, unadulterated Word, there is still hope.

With the exception of the time of the uprisings at Spirit Lake, the Indians who have visited this section have caused no serious trouble, except at time, in being nuisances. Neither did the settlers bother about them or molest them, except in rare cases such as instanced by the Lott

tradegy at Boone river (see history of Hamilton County), and the one other, which happened among a bunch of movers intent on making a location in this section.
There was a rattle-brained bully among them who had obtained a gun and acted smart by pointing his weapon this way and that, and causing shivers of apprehension among his fellow travelers. One day he eyed a bunch of Indians making camp nearby, and having boasted back in Illinois that he would get the first Indian he saw, he slung the gun to his shoulder letting fly a bullet in their midst. He made a hit sure enough, for one of them seen sitting on a log, a squaw, keeled over, and was carried away dead.

The settlers naturally felt a great fear that the Indians would seek early revenge, and looked with horror on the perpetrator of the foul deed. But the Indians did not immediately seek to be avenged through indiscriminate attack, but sent a delegation from their number calmly demanding that the murderer be delivered into their hands, to be dispatched by them. As this was no more than just, no one demurred, and the cowardly wretch was handed over and prompty given a dose of his own medicine. What an awful experience for his wife and children, who were left to fend for themselves and to weep in grief and shame at the dastardly crime committed by the husband and father.

May 10, 1923 (continued from last week): Tradition does not point to this particular section as having been the permanent home of any Indian tribe, but numerous arrow heads and a few other relics found, especially along the river, establishes the fact that here the red man found good hunting grounds in the long ago. It is not unlikely that these parts saw clashes between the Sacs and Foxes, who remained largely in this territory, as against the Sioux, who had established themselves further north. After the white man came, a neutral dividing line about twenty miles wide was fixed between the hostile tribes by the Government. It is said that this section was right on the border of it, presumably on the south side.

Northern Settlement References (northern Story County)

This section contains the first references to Meskwaki camping along the Skunk River that I learned about, references I heard from relatives after I began to research my family's history in 1977. One is a reference about Meskwaki "begging for" flour and chickens at my great grandparents' farmstead in Section 34, Howard Township. I grew up one mile south of their farmstead in Section 2, Milford Township, and I often rode my bicycle and later drove to the Skunk River three and one-half miles west of my parents' farm to go for walks and to hunt squirrels upstream from the old bridge. I still go for walks there, and I still enjoy driving past Ida Hondred's farmstead and by where the "H" Tree was located on my way up to Story City, favorite places of the Meskwaki whom I often think about when I am visiting these favorite places from my youth.

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Local news items from Story City newspapers:

Note: Reviewed the existing Story City newspapers from May 1887 through May 1910 very thoroughly for general information pertaining to Norwegian settlement, and found the following Indian news items during this review.

From *The Story City Herald*, October 11, 1895: Two wagon loads of Indians stopped off here last week on their way north. Their appearance was not as good as it was some years back, when bands of them hunted and trapped on the Skunk River.

Note: The reference to "on their way north" must be referring either to the Christytown area in southwest Scott Township or it could be the Little Wall Lake area, too. They are the only two areas where I have documented Meskwaki winter camps north of Story City.

From *The Story City Herald*, July 30, 1897: Some Indians have been in this vicinity of late. The Herald hasn't learned where they are staying, but it is very likely they are wandering up and down Skunk river in quest of game, fish, and whatever is to be found. A big, fat, greasy buck was in Story City, Wednesday and gave the citizens a look at what was once a common sight.

Note: The date of this news item is interesting because I thought the Meskwaki spent their summers in their settlement in Tama County. Since this news items is referring to a male, perhaps some of the men came to fish and hunt.

From *The Messenger*, November 16, 1897: A number of Indians has been in this vicinity for a week. They are from the Tama reservation and very peaceable. *Visergutten* claims that they are reading that paper especially the advertisements. Next week we may look for an article claiming that they are descendants of Leif Ericson's crew which he left here in the 10th century, and that they have not since that day forgot their Norwegian language, especially when it is written in the Æte dialect.

Note: *Visergutten* was a Norwegian-language newspaper published in Story City, and the above news items is typical of the friendly rivalry that existed between the editors of the two local newspapers, O. B. Peterson, editor of *The Messenger*, and H. Hallaland, editor of the *Visergutten*.

From *The Messenger*, November 23, 1897: About 9 o'clock last Tuesday evening Mr. Sam Wier came into town and reported that the Indians, who camped about a half a mile west of his place near the river, were making a disturbance. It appears that they had succeeded to get on a glorious drunk and were having a regular war dance. They had chased their squaws and papooses out of camp, they seeking shelter at Ole Thorsbakkens. The authorities here thought that this case properly belonged to the state of Howard [Township], and so referred the settlers to Hans Hustler [whose real name was E. F. Bell] who was the commander-in-chief of the state militia of Howard, but as it was supposed that they had disbanded for the night, the LaFayette [Township] authorities made a reconnoitering tour. Lieutenant Severeid then secured a bodyguard of four consisting of E. M. Harrington, L. A. Dale, Geo. Bonde, and O. B. Peterson.

This company made direct for the seat of war, but when we arrived there everything was quiet. The Indians were awakened, but denied that they had made any disturbance. On returning from the Indian camp we met the picket of the white settler's guard, who would not let us pass before we gave the countersign which was — rats. We then proceeded to M. Thorsbakken to find out the trouble from the squaws and papooses, but as it was hard to determine whether it was actual fear or only a case of Indian family trouble, we left the scene in disgust, determined to apply to the next congress for pension for risking so much in quieting white settlers. As a matter of special mention we wish to speak of Mr. Harrington's wreckless bravery in leading the van into the enemy's camp with a lightened lantern in hand. For this act of bravery, we would recommend him for brevet major general in future expeditions of the Story City "Awkward squad" or home guards.

Note: In the "Locals" section of the newspaper O. B. Peterson, the newspaper editor and member of the group that went to the Meskwaki campsite to investigate the situation, also wrote the following: If the Indians actually got any intoxicant in town, it should be thoroughly investigated and the guilty party punished. Ignorance may have caused this late trouble, but for future reference we would say that it is a very grave offence against the United States laws to give or sell an Indian any intoxicating drinks, no matter what it is called. A good many persons are serving prison sentences for this offence. The ones who furnish liquor to the Indians are the ones who should be punished.

Location Information (85-23-06): The Ole Thorsbakken farmstead was in the northwest quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 6, Howard Township. The Skunk River was near the farmstead, so I assume the Meskwaki camp was nearby.

From *The Story City Herald*, September 21, 1905: Several Indians were in town Monday - doubtless soliciting Christmas donations.

From *The Story City Herald*, March 1, 1906: A band of Indians about six in number from the Tama reservation are camping two miles north of here.

From *The Story City Herald*, April 5, 1906: The Indians who have been camping on the river near town this past month report they have sold furs taken from the animals captured since coming here amounting to over $150.

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From *The Story City Herald Anniversary Number: A Quintuplet Celebration*, 1940:

Note: This 128-page supplement to *The Story City Herald* is a history of the Story City area told through the reminiscences of its long-time residents and former residents. The editor, Paul A. Olson (1873-1954), spent thirteen years of his boyhood in Story City and returned to purchase the newpaper in 1905. A. M. Henderson's "My Years in Story County" was written at Editor Olson's request (see p. 22), and judging from Olson's decision to include the two items reprinted below, Olson considered the Meskwaki's presence in the area long after the town of Story City was founded in 1855 to be an important part of the area's history.

p. 75, "Poweshiek Iowa's Biggest Indian:"

Iowa's biggest Indian chief, a head chief of the Fox tribe, weighted 250 pounds. Poweshiek, meaning "Roused Bear," was his name and his village was near the Iowa river not far from where Iowa City now stands.

He is described by historians as a powerful man, grateful for favors, a wise counselor, and always truthful. He was born on Iowa soil in 1797. When his tribe moved west he made his home near the mouth of the Racoon river. From there he went south with his peple to the Grand river and in 1856 reluctantly conducted them to the Kansas reservation.

CHIEF POWESHIEK SPEAKS IN FAREWELL

When an Indian chief made a speech it was news — and it was real news in 1838 when on July 4, Chief Poweshiek, friendly Indian, was invited to speak at the celebration marking the beginning of territorial Iowa.

Chief Poweshiek accepted the invitation. Pioneers came from miles around to celebrate the recognition granted June 12, 1838, when President Martin Van Buren signed the law enacted by congress creating Iowa. The celebration was held on ground that later became the site of the old stone capitol.

Chief Speaks

This monumental stone building now restored "was beginning to look down upon the valley of the Iowa river while the Sac and Fox Indians were still lingering in eastern Iowa." Around this building the University of Iowa has grown for more than 80 years.

Chief Poweshiek was on hand for the celebration. *The Palimpsest* of the historical society, quotes the chief as follows:

"Soon I shall go to a new home and you will plant corn where my dead sleep. Our towns, the paths we have made, and the flowers we love will soon be yours. I have moved many times and have seen the white man put his feet in the tracks of the Indian and make the earth into fields and gardens. I know that I must go away and you will be so glad when we have gone that you will soon forget that the meat and the lodge fire of the Indian have been forever free to the strangers, and at all times he has asked for what he fought for, the right to be free."

No Resentment

The white men mingled freely with the friendly Fox indians on this occasion. There is no record of bitter resentment by Poweshiek and his followers against the white men. He did not stand in the way of progress. He gave to Iowa the site of the old capitol which mirrored all of Iowa scenic beauty in streams, woodlands and hills, and the open prairie.

Here was the last real stand of the Indian in Iowa. The hill gave protection to the Indian from his enemies. Food was within easy reach — in the timber deer and turkeys were in abundance. Out in the open country, only a few steps, were the feeding places of prairie chickens. Along the secondary streams the beaver was building his dams and huts. This is not a flight of fancy. This is history — history from the site of the old stone capitol a century ago.

p. 123, "Tama Indians Descendants of Poweshiek:"

Man-we-keske. This is the greeting (meaning "Good Day") one receives at the Tama Indian reservation in Tama County where George Young Bear, great grandson of Poweshiek, is today spokesman for the remaining number of Fox Indians in this country.

The trend of the Indian population in Iowa, however, has reversed the steady declines of former years. Today the population of the Tama Indian reservation is 468 as compared with only 375 a few years ago.

George Young Bear's grandfather, Chief Push-e-tonequa, died in 1919. He was the last chief recognized by the United States government. The father of George Young Bear was Chief Young Bear, and he was the last chief officially recognized by the Fox tribe of Indians, but not by the United States government. John Poweshiek, who lives on the reservation, and Jonas Poweshiek, janitor at the state historical building, great grandsons of Chief Poweshiek, are popular leaders.

The Indians at Tama are the owners of 3,200 acres. Splendid schools have been built on the reservation. There is a United Presbyterian mission and other places of worship. Each Indian is alloted a plot adequate for the production of grains and vegetables to suit not only his own needs, but to market.

The fund which the United States government paid for land belonging to the Fox tribe has been put in a special government fund and the Indians are paid the interest twice yearly. The ownership of the land is on a communistic basis. A huge root cellar has been constructed in which the families jointly store winter vegetables and supplies.

When the Indian boys and girls reach high school age, they attend high school at Tama where they have made splendid records as to scholarship. However, the Indians appear to prefer to return to the tribal lands after completing high school course, rather than to seek employment off the reservation.

George Young Bear is the "correspondent," or reporter, for the English newspapers, and writes a column of news each week for the *Toledo Chronicle*.

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Local news items from Roland newspaper:

Note: Reviewed the existing Roland newspaper from its first issue February 1895 through February 1910 very thoroughly for general information pertaining to Norwegian settlement, and found the following Indian news items during this review.

From November 26, 1897: A gang of Mesquokia squaws and papooses were prowling around town Wednesday afternoon pursuing their usual avocation, that of begging. Why on the earth don't they stay down on their reservation at Tama where they belong and are provided for?

From August 8, 1900: A couple of Indian squaws made a round of the business houses here the other day looking for supplies. It is reported that T. P. Hermanson, Dr. Rice, H. C. Duea, and S. J. Michaelson mistook them for Chinese boxers. T. P. ran to his potato bin in the dark corner of his cellar, Dr. went to his hay mow resolved to sell his life early at the bottom of the hay, S. J. hid behind the ash barrel, while H. C. crawled up in the garret.

From October 30, 1901: The Tama Indians are having smallpox these days. Guards are being employed to keep them from wandering away from the reservation.

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References to campsites on both sides of the Skunk River near the bridge on highway E-18 one mile south of Story City:

Information received from David Osheim, Story City, Iowa:

January 27, 2009: I visited with David Osheim on the phone today regarding a story he told me a couple of years ago about his great aunt, Vernie S. Wierson (1898-1962). Vernie was the daughter of Sam S. (1867-1951) and Emily E. (Erickson) (1866-1933) Wierson who lived on a farm south of present County Road E-18 in Section 13, Lafayette Township. David said Vernie liked to tell stories about her life and one of them was about her father taking her across the road when she was a young girl to where Tama Indians were camped. They were camped about one-half mile south of E-18 and east of 560th Avenue, at the bottom of the hill and in an area that is protected from the wind. It was winter time and the Indians were hunting and trapping along the Skunk River. David remembers Vernie telling him the Indians were so nice and friendly to her and that as a young girl she thought the reason they treated her this way was that they did not want to get sent back to the reservation. Vernie also said the Indian women were facinated with her blonde hair and wanted to touch it and that they gave her some of the stew they were cooking. Vernie also told David that the Indian women would come to her parents' home occassionally and beg a chicken, but that they never stole anything. David said he has always understood that the Indians hunted and trapped along the Skunk River from Wall Lake down to around the McFarland Lake area.

Received January 27, 2009: Arlen, Your notes are accurate with a couple of changes: 1. The family farm is north of E-18. 2. The camp, as I understand it, was immediately south of the present E-18.

Sent January 27, 2009: Regarding the first change you sent, I thought you were talking about right across the road from you, but when I checked a copy of an 1902 Story County atlas I have that also contains a directory of leading farmers, it lists "Sam S. Wierson in Section 13," which does, indeed, place the farm north of E-18.

Regarding your second change, I have a question. When you said down the hill from the intersection of E-18 & 560th Avenue, did you mean down the hill to the south or down the hill to the east. Either place would mean the Tama Indians were camped in an area protected from the wind.

Received January 28, 2009: Yes, the Sam S. Wierson place was in Section 13. E-18 is the southern boundary of this section. The Indian camp was south of E-18 and east of its intersection with Hillcrest/560th. This would put in the NE corner of section 24 of Lafayette.

Sent January 28, 2009: Hello again, I am inclined to think the camping area would have been closer to the river, in the NW quarter of Section 19, Howard Township, because the other story I have from that area is close to the river two miles south in Section 31, Howard Township. The next time I see Steve Lekwa I will ask him what he knows about Indian campsites in that area. Sorry to be so picky about the location, but when I get around to writing my article about the Indian presence along the Upper Skunk River I am going to include a map showing the locations where the Indians were known to have camped.

Location Information (85-23-19): Viewed this area on Google Earth and am quite sure the campsite location must have been in the northwest corner of Section 19, Howard Township.

Information received from Steve Lekwa, retired director of the Story County Conservation program and author of "Naturally Speaking," a weekly column published in local newspapers:

February 25, 2012 - Emailed Steve to see if he has written about the Meskwaki, and received the following response the next day:

No, Arlen, I haven't. I am aware of a couple of sites that I have been told were once encampments. I have no confirmation of either, though.

The first is the hilltop where I grew up south of Story City and where my brother still lives. One of the early Hermansons told my dad he used to play with Indian children when they camped there. Evidence of fire pits with charcoal were found during preliminary surveys for the new Skunk River bridge on E-18 there. The other would have predated that and lies near the confluence of Bear Creek and the Skunk, a natural place for an encampment with good water, good timber, and a sheltering hill on the north. A history teacher from Ames, now deceased, was told that an Indian "chief" had been brought back to that site from Oklahoma where the Meskwaki were resettled before they returned to Iowa to purchase land near Tama. The story went that it had been a favored campsite and he wanted to be buried there. I wish I could remember his source for that story, but in all likelihood they're probably gone now, too.

Others have found evidence of encampments all up and down the Skunk with fire pits, broken tools, and pottery. Many of them are registered archaeological sites. None appear to be anything like long-term settlements, though.

Sent February 27, 2012: Thanks for getting back to me so quickly. Just took a look at the E-18 bridge on Google Earth, and I assume the hilltop you are referring to is on the south side of the highway on the east side of the river. David Osheim's grandmother told him she visited Indians camped south of the highway on the west side of the river which I think must have been in the well-protected area at the bottom of the gravel road. Also have a letter from Jack Frandsen relating stories Ole Monson (1872-1970) told him about Indians camped by the river farther south in Section 31, Howard Township.

Regarding the story about a Meskwaki being brought back from Oklahoma to be buried at the Bear Creek location, in *Stalking the Skunk*, Gradwohl and Osborn, state they did not find any burial remains in the 1970s study. However, I just talked to someone in Huxley this morning whose father was a horse breeder and learned that members of the Meskwai tribe living in Oklahoma came to Huxley in the mid-1940s to have mares bred by one of his father's stallions, so there might be some truth to the story about Meskwaki bringing a body back to be buried by Bear Creek. Guess I should also add that Johnathan Buffalo told me that the treaty signed by the Sauk and Fox in 1842 guaranteed them free rail transportation, and this is explains why they would bring their horses and wagons all the way from Oklahoma to see their friends in Tama and to have their mares bred in Huxley.

This is all very interesting to me. I have information about camp locations all the way from Little Wall Lake to Franklin Township in Polk County beside the Skunk and on creeks flowing into it. The location that has been written about most extensively is the one in Christytown.

Received February 28, 2012: Yes, Arlen. That's the right hill. My guess is that the whole valley and the adjoining uplands are studded with old campsites since the Meskwaki and Sioux, among other tribes, hunted the area for many generations before European settlement displaced them in the mid 1800s. The actual test pits where charcoal was found near the new E-18 bridge were on the river terrace just SE of the bridge. Charcoal on the hill just above the old Boy Scout cabin in the family pasture would be suspect today because we camped there often as kids. I kind of like the idea that ashes from our fires mingle with those of the Indians who lived on the land for much longer than we Europeans have. That hill crest just south of Dave's house is another prime spot. Old river meanders were right under it at times in the not-so-distant past. Their channels are still easily visible today.

Mingled ashes gives me an idea for a column that I'll need to write tomorrow. Thanks for triggering the thought.

Location Information (85-23-19): The campsite must have been on the east side of Skunk River in Section 19, Howard Township, close to highway E-18.

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From the *Story City Herald*, September 29, 1938: "A Reminiscence" by Mrs. Erick Johnson:

As I was sitting in my home today I said to myself: "Well, I declare, it is not so long until our annual meeting of the Tjelmeland clan is held in that good old Story City park." I sat thinking, and many fond memories of my childhood came back to me, so vivid as though it was but yesterday, and I felt a desire to jot down a few of those long ago but never to be forgotten incidents that happened when I was a child.

Father and mother came to Illinois in 1862, if I remember right. They left their fatherland, Norway, to seek their fortune in this land of opportunities. They resided in Illinois for six years, then father got the fever to go west. So, together with two or three other families, they got their covered wagons ready for their going, and horses, cattle, and provisions for our needs were provided.

I have often wished I had been old enough to remember that journey, but being too young to grasp the many interesting things that happened I had to content myself until I got older, to hear my parents tell about the things that happened on our journey. We children loved to listen to the details.

There was at that time a lot of Indians roaming around, and fond of horses and ponies, and one evening a bunch of Indians came up to where we were camping over-night. Their intention, no doubt, was to steal one or more of our horses, but our men and women came to the rescue. One woman in our company who had a lot of grit went up to one of the Indians and shook her fist at him, and not being so familiar with the English language says, to him, "Me man can vip tree of you." They sneaked away and our horses were safe.

Another incident which I recall they mentioned: It was at the time of the Civil War, and a troop of soldiers were stationed in a town, which our company passed thru, and one soldier, a deserter, tried to escape, but was shot down, which caused great excitement. And while I am writing this down, it reminds me of the time of the late World war, when two of my boys were getting ready to sail for France; and in parting I laid great stress on that they should be true to their country, come what may; and the good Lord ordained it so, that after a year's service across, they both came back safe and sound and with honor.

Well, our journey to Iowa lasted three weeks. Having no home to go to at first, we found shelter with some friends, who had gone west the year before. We stayed with them thru the winter. In the spring father bought a 40 acre farm. The only improvements on the farm was a small log house and a stable for the horses. As I have already mentioned, there were quite a few Indians camping in the woods along the river; they were harmless, but nevertheless, we had a fear of the men more so than of the squaws. One day mother and we children were home alone, and we saw three big Indians coming toward our house, each carrying a big knife. We became very frightened, and thought our last moment had come. Mother sent up a silent prayer for protection and, lo and behold, they passed the house and made for the back yard where father had an old-fashioned grindstone. The Indians must have noticed it, and thought it was a good chance to sharpen their knives, and when they had so done they walked peacefully away, to our great relief.

Notes: See folder in Histories and Studies section of archives for the research I have done to identify Mrs. Johnson's parents.

Location Information (85-23-07): Pretty sure Mrs. Johnson's father is the E. T. Erickson on the 1880 plat map owning land in the southwest quarter of Section 8, Howard Township, but on 1885 Census they are living in Section 7, Howard Township, Lot 9 SW with four children ages 11-24.

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From "H. B. Henryson's Pioneer Story" as recorded by Nehemias Tjernagel, *The Story City Herald*, February 23, 1922:

Note: H. B. Henryson (1847-1917) and his parents settled on a farm on the east side of the Skunk River in 1858, a farm that was also known as the Beroen farm.

There were plenty of Indians who roamed the country those days. They rode, they walked, they begged, loafed, hunted, smoked, fished, trapped, made themselves a nuisance, and had a glorious time. There were wild animals of different kinds, such as wolves, foxes, minks and just a few remaining buffalo, elk and deer. Skunks and rabbits were thicker than rats. There were ten different kinds of snakes. Skunks thrive best where the soil and vegetation is richest, where game and eggs are abundant, hence this was the Skunk's Eldorado, and there the name "Chicago," (which means skunk in english) was given the river flowing through this animal's kingdon, by the Indians. The redskins ate him, and his fur is now very popular.

Location Information (85-23-07): The Henryson aka Beroen farmstead was in Section 7, Howard Township, Lot 8, in the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter.

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From the "Arrasmith Family on one Story County farm Since 1852," *Nevada Evening Journal Centennial Edition,* June 13,1953:

Note: William and Alvina Arrasmith were married in Indiana in March 1852 and immediately headed for land previously purchased in Franklin Township, Story County, Iowa. Their family story was written by their youngest daughter, Edith, in 1946. Edith was born in 1878.

Call From An Indian: I have heard father tell of how one day in early times he was digging potatoes when all at once he heard a grunt and looked up and there stood an Indian wearing a bright colored blanket around his shoulders. The Indian grunted again and pointed to the potatoes. Father pulled up a potato plant with a lot of potatoes hanging to the roots. The Indian picked up one corner of his blanket, and father put in potatoes until the Indian grunted again which meant enough. He then pointed to some corn near by and father gathered roasting ears until he again grunted enough, then stalked away.

He and his squaw were camped not far from the cabin. The Indians who roamed through that part of the county were peaceable and never harmed the settlers. When I was a small girl, bands of them would camp near Skunk river between our home and Ames and hunt and trap during the winter.

The squaws made beautiful bead work and also pretty baskets from wood split thin, then dyed and woven in strips. We children had one such basket in which we carried our lunch to school.

I remember my first trip to the Indian camp. Several of my older brothers and sisters were along, also my niece, Vina Aarasmith, my junior by about two and a half years. We went in a bobsled with a high box and Vina and I thought it lots of fun on the way, but when we got there, the dogs came charging out. Every tent seemed to have two or three dogs. They barked so loud that Vina and I began to cry and wouldn't get out of the sled. So, of course, the others went in and we stayed there and squalled and the dogs barked and we wished we were with the rest of the folks. I went later on, a number of times, and really went into the tents with the others.

Location Information (85-23-23): Section 23, Franklin Township. "Mr. Wm. Arrasmith has not so fine a house and barn as some others, but he has a lovely situation. His native grove, for protection, is surely nice and valuable. He resides on the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of section 23, and is one of the first settlers of Story County." (Allen, 1887, p. 196)

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From *The Story City Herald*, February 9, 1922, "Pioneer Life" by James F. Brown:

The Tama Co. Indians were frequent visitors in these parts years ago. They came with their families, pitching their tents along the streams, from which points they would make fishing, trapping, and hunting expeditions. Their women frequently walked around in the neighborhood, often two together, begging for food such as bread, butter, meat, eggs, potatoes, squashes, honey, corn, etc. They were experts on food value. It pleased them best that each one be given the same amount of food. Sometimes they would ride their ponies with baby strapped on the back papoose fashion. Grant, our youngest son, once asked a squaw if she had ever seen the Devil, to which she answered, yes. He also asked her what he looked like. She replied that he had horns and held a pitchfork in his hands.

During the Spirit Lake massacre excitement, a number of people living up north came as far south as Story City in their wagons, fearing that the hositilities would molest them if they remained at home. Kindness, generally practiced, is the best method of preventing war.

When we located here in 1856 there were no schools and churches, the roving bands of Indians felt no lack, being satisfied to do as their fathers had done before them. Now the gospel of Salvation has brought with it the Church and the School.

From "Came To Lafayette Township In 1856" by J. F. Brown, 1902, in *The Story City Herald 1940 Anniversary Number*, p. 64:

April 13, 1856, we arrived here; the country was then new, making it our future home from that day to this, in summer's heat and winter's cold; formerly we were from Crawford county, Pa.

The township of Lafayette is located in the northwest corner of Story county. Skunk river courses south and the Kegley creek courses southeast and empties into Skunk river, with a fair proportion of timber as its fringe. The surface is mostly level dark prairie soil. Its stiff sod was hard to break. In places ponds were plentiful. Ducks, grouse, game and the roaming Indians possessed the land. The few neighbors had located scatteringly along the Skunk.

...We entered the southeast quarter of Section 26 June 15, 1855, and commenced to improve it in the spring of 1856. Constantly we have added new and better improvements to keep pace with the growth of our advancing country.

Location Information (85-24-26): On the 1880 plat map, J. F. Brown owned the southeast quarter of Section 26, Howard Township. His farmstead is shown in the southeast part of the

160 acres and Keigley Branch aka Keigley Creek runs from the northwest corner of his property down to the southern midpoint of the two 80 acres.

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Received the following letter from Jack Frandsen, Roland, Iowa, dated March 29, 2007, that was a response to my March 21, 2007, Letter to the Editor in *The Story City Herald* requesting stories about Meskwaki along the Skunk River:

When I read your letter to the editor in the *Story City Herald*, it was rather intriguing. You have chosen a very worthwhile project to further understand and show how the Indians lived before we took their land and disrupted their lifestyle.

I will soon be 79 years old and I well remember as a young boy an elderly gentleman by the name of Ole Monsen. Ole lived quite close to the Skunk River 3 miles south of Story City or 10 miles north of Ames. Ole never married and would tell how he would pass time by watching and keeping track of the Indians. His home and other buildings were surrounded by big Bur Oak trees that were well over 100 years old. Many of them had diameters of 36"—40". Ole knew the vantage points to watch the Indians. Often they would camp along the Skunk River. When it started to get dark they would have two bonfires, once in a while three. These fires were only small ones, but they would keep them warm. When they were about burned out they would go to sleep.

Ole said the one thing he enjoyed was watching the Indians wrestle. They always used the same sandbar for this and there was no time limit. There were two things that ended the match, either one would get thrown or rolled into the river or one of them would get pinned until the Indian being pinned would shout, "I give up."

Ole said he didn't trust the Indians so never tried to be a friend of them. He had many arrow heads and stories. To my knowledge they are all gone.

The time frame of this would be from 1840-1870.

Note: This time frame is incorrect because Ole Monson was not born until 1872.

Haven't we seen our country change? If our technology keeps forcing this country to change, what will it be like in another 25-50 years?

Good luck on your endeavors,

Jack Frandsen

Location Information (85-23-31): A second undated letter from Jack states Ole Monson's farm was in Section 31, Howard Township. According to a 1902 plat map, it was in the north central part of Section 31, Howard Township. The Meskwaki who visited the J. F. Brown farmstead (see above) likely were from this camp location.

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Notes from January 27, 1978, when Dad took me to see Knutie Lein who lived in Roland across the street from Grandma Twedt:

"Knutie recalled the Indians coming to their homes for a meal. They came on foot, couldn't speak any English so they would just sit there and eat. He thought they probably came from Tama and were headed for the Skunk River."

Note: Knutie was born in Emmet County in 1894 or 1895, but his parents died when he was very young so he was raised by his Aunt Augusta who married Ole J. Twedt. Need to find out where they lived to see how far from the Skunk River this was.

Location Information (85-22-31): The Twedt farmstead was in the northwest corner of Section 31, Warren Township, six miles east of the Skunk River.

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From *Stalking The Skunk* by David M. Gradwohl and Nancy M. Osborn, 1972:

p. 12: Some pioneer accounts tell of Indians who seasonally inhabited the northern Skunk drainage.... Mrs. Henry Schomaker, whose grandfather homesteaded land on Bear Creek, said her father recalls that Indians camped along that stream each fall and spring "with their red blankets and ponies" and came to the house upon occasion to ask for food. These Native Americans were probably Mesquakies (Sauk and Fox) and possibily some Pottawattomies....

Location Information (84-23-28): Mrs. Henry Schomaker's maiden name was Julia Raymond (1900-1993), daughter of Andrew and Ellen Raymond whose farmstead was in the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 28, Howard Township. Bear Creek flows in a southwesterly direction all through Howard Township and flowed through the north one-half of the 40 acres where the Raymond farmstead was located.

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From *Milford Township And Proud Of It,* 2007:

p. 61: In the Nevada paper of the summer of 1897 there appeared on a little statement as follows: "A camp of Indians near Bear Creek Bridge is the center of attraction now." This would have been near the place where Horness and Honderd families lived in the 1960's.

Location Information (84-23-05): Bear Creek flows through all of Howard Township and enters the Skunk River on the west side of Section 6, Milford Township, the section in the northwest corner of the township. There is a road shown close to the east side of Skunk River on an 1880 plat map and if this is where the bridge was located, it appears the Bear Creek Bridge would have been in Section 5, Milford Township.

p. 268: "Prehistoric Milford Township" by Jimmie D. Thompson, Class of 1957

I have recorded over 230 Indian sites in Story, Marshall, Boone, Polk, Hamilton, and Green Counties with the State Archaeologist's Office in Iowa City. Of these, 65 are in Story County. Of these 65 sites, 16 were found in Milford Township. An additional 12 were recorded by Gradwohl and Osborn of the Anthropology Department at Iowa State University. These additional sites were reported in their paper, "Stalking the Skunk: A preliminary survey and appraisal of archaealogical resources in the Ames Reservoir" of 1972. Their archaeaological survey was under the auspices of a National Park Service contract and "Contributions to the Ames Reservoir Environmental Resources Review Study" sponsored by the United States Army Corps of Engineers Contract. This proposed Skunk River reservoir was cancelled, in part, due to strenuous local objections. If developed, a part of this new lake would have been in the far northwest corner of Milford Township.

As with most Indian sites, water and woodlands were the main necessity. The majority of Indian villages were along or near the Skunk River in sections 5, 6, 7, 17, and 18 of the northwest quarter of Milford Township.

An Indian burial mound I reported is in section 13 of adjacent Franklin Township about 3/4 of a mile west of Milford Township. Members of the Anthropology Department at Iowa State recovered a Woodland Period, 500 B.C. to 1100 A.D., pottery shard in a core probe of the mound. The mound is small, approximately 10 feet in diameter and less than 2 feet high.

Three of Milford Township's sites have been the most prolific for collecting artifacts than any of the sites I have collected. These sites are; the bank of Skunk River near Sopher's Mill, the Skunk River floodplain field of the former Honderd residence, and the high hilltop of the former Fitzgerald residence. At one time that hill was used for sledding by Milford students. The interstate now cuts through the west side of the hill.

Location Information (84-23-05): The three areas identified above are in Section 5 of Milford Township. The hilltop he is referring to must be the hilltop that overlooks the hill where I went sledding as a kid and the floodplain beyond it. I am pretty sure Bear Creek is visible from there, too. According to the artifact information below, this must have been a camping area for Native Americans for centuries.

Artifacts found in Milford Township would range in age from approximately 400 to 500 years old (1600-1500 A.D. to at least 6,000 years old (4,000 B.C) or more.

Try to imagine what Milford Township looked like 6,000 years ago.

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From "The True Native Iowans-The Indians" in *Ames, the early years in word and picture: From Marsh to Modern City* by Farwell T. Brown, 1993, pp. 11-12:

A friendy relationship long existed between the Mesquakie Indians and the people who settled near the streams in Story County. Ida Honderd, whose family has resided since 1896 near the present Pleasant Valley road that lies along the east side of the Skunk River about seven miles north of Ames, recalls the Mesquakie Indians who camped for many weeks during the fall of 1908 in her father's open timber pasture. It was for the hunting and fishing along the river that the Indians came to that area, she recalls.

The Indians did not bother the farm folks in the neighborhood, Mrs. Hondred, who is now in her late eighties, told me recently. The Indians were never known to steal, she tells me. She does remember that she and her school girl friends did not hesitate to turn over their aprons full of plums to an Indian woman who asked for them. The plums had been given to the little girls by a neighbor lady when they were returning home from school.

Mrs. Honderd also recalls that the Indians had a favorite camp site near the famous "H" tree that, until just a few years ago, still stood near the river opposite the Forty and Eight cabin located about a mile north of her parents' farm home.

Location Information (85-23-30): The "H" Tree was located in the south central part of Section 30, Howard Township, a tree that was a victim of Dutch Elm disease in the 1970s. *Milford Township And Proud Of It*, 2007, states, "Local legends talk of this tree receiving help in attaining its shape from Indian lads tying two good branches of two different elms together. One is a red (slippery) elm and the other a white (American) elm. The resulting profile of two individual trees becoming one and producing yet a third was too much of a symbol to be missed and thus was created the legend of this beautiful area as an Indian wedding tree. Estimates are that the trees began their lives in the mid 1700s, long before the appearance of European man in the early 1850s in this area."

Location Information (84-23-05): The Hondred farmstead was beside the Skunk River in Section 5, Milford Township.

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From an untitled hand-written letter by Amos Twedt to a grand-nephew describing what he knew about the lives of the nephew's ancestors, 1977:

Note: The first time I heard about Meskwaki camping along the Skunk River was December 30, 1977, when my father took me to visit his first cousin, Amos Twedt, to learn more about my Twedt ancestors, especially my paternal great grandparents, John (1845-1925) and Anna (1846-1923) Twedt, whom Amos had lived with when he was a young boy. I received a copy of Amos' letter/memoir to his nephew in 1978, and I met with Amos several times before publishing a family history in 1985. Amos loved to talk about his family's history, and I heard him tell the stories below at least two times, likely three. He was quite a story teller and I often had the feeling he was embellishing his stories. Amos' first cousin interviewed John Twedt for a biography assignment she wrote while she was in college, a biography that states, "Before coming to Iowa, he stopped off at Chicago to visit relatives for about a month. He came to Nevada, Iowa, In Story County, on the 24th day of April, 1866....,and he soon found out where to go and find his relatives. There was no railroad, so he walked from Nevada to his relatives, a distance of about fifteen miles.... So, Amos' cousin's version of John Twedt's arrival in Story County is quite different from Amos' version which has always caused me to question the accuracy of the information below and wonder if Amos was mixing his own family's history with other stories he had heard about Indians. It is Amos' stories, however, that instilled an interest in me to begin collecting other references to Indians as I completed my family history and later became interested in the local and regional history of Norwegian immigrant settlement in central Iowa.

...But I want to tell about him (Amos' grandfather, John Twedt 1845-1925) coming from Chicago horseback cross country through timber in Tama County (The Indian reservation there). Two Indians jumped out and grabbed his horse. He never got excited over anything. He just sat in the saddle waiting for something to happen. He chewed tobacco, always did. So, in order to think, well, he reached in his pocket and got the tobacco, bit off a chew. The Indian saw that and wanted it. So, he gave it to him. Then he reached back and got a plug for the other Indian. They released his horse and how they found him again nobody knew because after he located on the farm south of Roland every summer the Indians would come by and grandmother Twedt would give them flour, garden vegetables, and a couple of chickens. Then they would go in their covered wagon to the Evans pasture which joined grandfather's farm. There was an Indian burial ground there about 12-15 mounds with a chief's son in it. Then on the Skunk River about 6 or 7 miles more they'd camp there about a month before returning to Tama Reservation and sometimes come by our farm again. Your Uncle Albert and I always thought we'd like to explore couple of those graves but we never did. Guess we considered the consequences and let it go at that.

Reason I know so much about it, I lived with grandparents since I was 3 years old (Amos was born in 1896). You see, my mother died at childbirth when Bertha, my sister, was born. I was 10 when Dad married again to your grandmother. Then we both, Bertha and I, lived with my dad and your grandmother till we were grown and on our own.

Location Information (85-23-34 & 84-23-03): The farmstead where Amos lived with his grandparents was in southeast quarter of Section 34, Howard Township. The Indian mounds Amos claimed were nearby would have been in Section 3, Milford Township, by a ravine in the northwest quarter of the section.

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Information about Indian Hill in Milford Township:

From an obituary for W. C. Spencer, *The Story City Herald*, October 17, 1935: When four years of age his parents came west and located near Indian Hill, Milford Township, Story County, where he, with his parents, lived for a few years.

May 28, 2007: Visited with Clarion Thompson at the Memorial Day services at the Roland Cemetery about our conversation a couple of years ago concerning Indian Hill. Clarion grew up on the farm where "Indian Hill" is located, and during the previous conversation I am quite sure Clarion told me that Howie Larson from Roland had brought his students out to Indian Hill to hunt Indian artifacts. However, when I called Howie the next day, I learned that Howie taught earth science, and he always took his students on a field trip to visit unusual land formations. He said his students had never found any Indian artifacts there which may explain when I asked Clarion at the cemetery if he had heard any Indian stories related to the hill, he said he hadn't. Perhaps I misunderstood him during our first conversation about Indian Hill, but at least now I know that. This does make me wonder, however, how it got its name. Maybe "Indian Hill" is something the early settlers came up with.

Location Information (84-23-04): Indian Hill is in the southeast quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 4, Milford Township.

Ames Area References

Gladys Meads' statement below, "The prairie lands and the Indian can not be separated in memory," is so true, and, thankfully, she took the time to seek out and record the memories of people who witnessed the presence of Meskwaki in the Ames area even after the turn of the century, long after the prairie had been settled. I am thankful to Farwell Brown, too, who in addition to writing about his own family's memories of the Meskwaki, collected news items about them as he reviewed Ames newspapers for his numerous publications about the history of Ames.

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From "The Sognings Came to Hamilton County 80 years Ago This Month And 3 of Original Party are Still Living" by Mrs. Odean Monson as told by John Fardal of Stanhope, *The Story City Herald*, June 2,1949:

Indian Scare: John Fardal remembers getting up at three o'clock in the morning to go to Boone with some of the older ones, of how scared he was when they met two Indians on the road. When they returned they came to a camp of Indians on Squaw Creek, and were sure the settlement would be attacked and the people massacred. These were, however, friendly Indians and no one was molested.

Frequently, in going to market they had to ford Squaw Creek, when it was running bank full of water. They lashed the box to the wagon with ropes to keep it from floating away and once some of them barely made it as the oxen and wagon were carried down the stream.

Location Information: (84-24-21) The Fardal farmstead was in the southwest quarter of Section 21, Clear Lake Township, Hamilton County. However, what route John took to Boone that required him to cross Squaw Creek and how far upstream from Ames it was is unknown, but it is assumed he forded Squaw Creek some place in Franklin Township.

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From *At the Squaw and the Skunk* by Gladys H. Meads, 1955:

Note: This book was published serially in the *Ames Daily Tribune* in 1954.

p. 16: Indians and Gypsies camped in the woods where Friley Hall stands now, back in 1893. They would often go up the hill to Anson Marston's house to beg and to get cold water from the well. In fact, even travelers sometimes camped overnight here as they went through Ames on horseback or in their Conestogas.

After the long pull from Ames out the sandy hill that today would lead into Knoll Road, they were apt to think this wooded spot ideal to camp and rest their stock.

The high ridge, by the way, that makes up the rise that is today Stanton Avenue was once called Indian Ridge because that was an early camping ground of roaming Iowa tribes. Cooking utensils and stone scrapers and such have been found in that locale.

Location Information (83-24-5 & 6): Friley Hall is on the west side of Lake Laverne on the campus of Iowa State University, Knoll Road is northwest of the lake, and Stanton Avenue is is a two-block street just south of the lake. Lake Laverne must be a man-made lake because I do not see it on the 1880 plat map. On the 1880 plat map, the college is shown in the south-central part of Section 4, Washington Township, and New Philadelphia is in Sections 5 & 6. Just west of New Philadelphia is Ontario with Clear Creek running through New Philadelpha and flowing into Squaw Creek. Viewing this area from Google Earth, I can see there are still lots of woods along Clear Creek, so this must have been where the Meskwaki camped while they hunted and trapped on Clear Creek and Onion Creek just above it.

p. 19: Many an old timer in Ames recalling for me the days of the past had something to tell about the Indians that were dispossessed by the coming of the white man into this state.

In the fall the Indians camped along the Skunk River among the timberlands which was of course not far from the little village of Ames.

Location Information: Assume Meads is referring to a camping area on the west side of the Skunk River north of Ames, perhaps near where the old town of Bloomington was located (see 1875 county map). Farwell Brown (see below) also refers to a camp location north of Ames.

They were friendly tribes and delighted in teaching the white children how to talk the gutterals which were their language.

They scared the daylights out of the early fathers and brothers of the town by silently appearing while the white men were cutting timber or doing other labor and would just stand stock still silently watching till suddenly the woodsman would have that familiar “looked at” feeling and look around, startled and find company had come.

They were friendly, however, and while their habit was disturbing it could hardly be called dangerous. These Indians delighted in teaching the settlers how to weave and string beads, doubtless the beginning of the Camp Fire crafts of today.

Mrs. Herman Knapp reported about Indians to her daughter, Jeanette Stoddard, that when she first came to Ames in 1885 she could remember that the Indians then were on the reservation alotted to them near Tama and that many times they would come to Ames and stand watching the customers go and come into the Bigelow and Huntington general store that later became Bigelow and Tilden’s and then Tilden’s store as we know it today.

The prairie lands and the Indian can not be separated in memory.

p. 43: In the floor within the house, Miller has preserved the original trap door that led beneath the foundation where a safe hiding place from the Indians might be used. The floor that was laid in the beginning has been left as it was in the room where the trap door opening is, and the material of the floor is white pine tongue and grooved into place.

p. 118: Mrs. Lyman (Charles Lyman's mother, Charlie, later was the sales manager of the Tilden Pennant Factory, in remembering her days in the little village that was to be Ames, said that her first sight of Ames was an elevator with "Ames" painted on it.

"We couldn't get what we wanted to eat in those days in the town. We could get chicken, duck and fish—but not salt. There were quite a number of Indians about and one squaw gave me some steamed herbs for my asthma."

Jennie McElyea Beyer used to tell many interesting early stories.... "My father built on Beech street in 1868 and I went to school and college here and graduated from IAC in 1879. At the time we came here there were Indians all about. My father went to their village one time to get a pony and went into a tepee to get beads. A savory dish was being cooked and a squaw was stirring it with a stick, then she reached out and hit the dog with same stick. My father drove the span of ponies he got that day for years."

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From Farwell Brown's notebooks in the Ames Historical Society's archives:

Note: I found some of Farwell Brown's gleanings from Ames newspapers while working in the archives of the Ames Historical Society on February 20, 2009. His mainly hand-written notes are kept in three-ring binders, but the items about Indians were easy to find because they were indexed in the back of his book, *Ames In Word and Picture*, 1999. Later, I learned they were also published in his 1993 book about Ames.

From the *Intelligencer*, January 20, 1877: The Tama County Indians encamped in the vicinity of Ames will give an Indian Concert and War Dance in Opera Hall on Saturday evening of next week. The array of star performers fairly takes the breath away and includes the noted actors John Pupetonka (bass profundi), Mack Deer (the greatest of living tenor), Ben Aluck (Mezzo Soprano), Sheheguonis (contralto), Pe-do-to-qua, Jo-to-doz-see, Jack Komo, Omossa, Oben-of, Neshodome, Neena, No-tenichock, and others. The Mesquakee tribe will open in war paint and in their original war and peace and love songs and dances and pow-wows, with drums and other musical instruments. 25¢ and 15¢

From the *Intelligencer*, May 11, 1877: Some dozen Indians of ages 13 to 50 summers amused our lovers of sport yesterday by shooting with bow and arrow at pennies!

From the *Intelligencer,* May 18, 1877: Quite a large party of Indians have been encamped within a mile or so of the city for the past two weeks. Since their arrival "Archery" has become the leading pastime around the town. Our pale face youth don't meet with the same success in hitting pennies across the streets the red boys do, and we fear by the time they become as expert, the fun will have lost its novely.

From the *Intelligencer*, May 18, 1877: Last week one of the squaws belong to the Indian party visiting our city quite suddenly and inopportunly gave birth to a bouncing pair of twins. The little affair occurred near a street corner on the south side, and great was the joy of the proud papa at the eagerness of the citizenery to see his progeny.

The mother didn't like the publicity quite so well and refused to allow any of the ladies who "called" to see them. However, she showed them up with a certain degree of pride to all gentlemen callers.

From the *Intelligencer*, July 5, 1890: Indian Jim Thompson with his wife and little boy were seen on our streets Friday. They had come on ponies from the reservation and expected to return Saturday.

From the ISC Student (newspaper?), April 21, 1920: Five Musquakie Indians from the Tama Indian reservation are today searching Squaw Creek for the body of Frank Niforatos who was drowned when the car in which he was riding with Frank Coukoulis went thru the railing of the make-shift Squaw Creek bridge at noon on Friday, April 2.

The Indians were brought here by Greek residents of the city to continue the search for the missing body. They are being paid by the day for their services and when they find the body they will receive the balance of the $200 reward put up by James Angelos on behalf of the Greek residents of Ames.

Arriving in the city yesterday, the Indians started the search yesterday afternon and are expected to continue until the body is found or until all hope of recovering it is gone.

Wading out into the cold water of the creek, the Indians are conducting a systematic search. The entire creek bottom will be searched and the hunt carred on down the river in the event that no results are obtained in the neighborhood of where the car went into the creek.

March 30, 1922: Indian - First to attend ISC from Tama. Wm. Thompson

Note: There is no source listed for this item but it might have been the college newspaper because the item listed above it is "Viesha - New Name for Celebration." Also, the Thompson item is likely just the headline for an article that Farwell Brown did not copy.

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From "The True Native Iowans-The Indians" in *Ames, the early years in word and picture: From Marsh to Modern City* by Farwell T. Brown, 1993, p. 10:

"Possibily I will run off with a 'Big Indian' - there are lots of them this year, and one of them, 'Big John,' taught me to skate last winter. He is splendid"

Lillian Brown, while a teenager in Ames, wrote the above words in her October 1, 1884, letter to her cousin back in Jefferson County, N.Y. She was, possibily, embellishing a good story a bit to impress her Eastern cousin. Her younger brother, my father, often told us about those Indians who came over from Tama every fall to hunt and fish along the Skunk River close to Ames. According to my father, they camped north of Ames where they often remained for several months before returning to their settlement near Tama. It was a frequent experience for the Ames boys and girls of those early days to learn about archery and Indian lore firsthand from the visitors from Tama.
Location Information: Assume Brown is referring to a camping area on the west side of the Skunk River north of Ames, perhaps near where the old town of Bloomington was located (see 1875 county map). Meads (see above) also refers to a camp location north of Ames.

Southern Settlement References
(southern Story County and northern Polk County)

The Southern Norwegian Settlement area includes Palestine and Union townships in southern Story County and Lincoln and Elkhart townships in northern Polk County with the Skunk River flowing through Union and Elkhart township and Walnut Creek and Ballard Creek flowing into the Skunk River from the west in Union Township. Although I am quite sure this was a popular Meskwaki hunting and trapping area, too, I have not found as many pioneer references to their presence in this area compared to farther upstream along the Skunk River. I have not made a systematic review of the early editions of the Cambridge newspapers, so this is, perhaps, one reason I do not know of more camp locations, but a second reason is that there has been much less less written about the Southern Settlement compared to the Northern Settlement.

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From a special edition, "Frontier Days," published by *The Slater News*, Andrew Maland, editor and author of this reference, May 18, 1938:

Note: Andrew Maland (1874-1957) grew up on a farm in Section 36, Palestine Township, two miles south of Huxley, so he had personal experience and knowledge from the Huxley and Cambridge area to draw upon. He was also an avid fisherman which may explain his familarity with favorite Indian hunting and trapping areas west of Slater, Iowa, along Big Creek and the Des Moines River.

The Indians: The early settlers did not find the Indians in any great number. The reason was obvious—the character of the country was not to their liking. The Indian loved to hunt and fish. He also loved his canoe and chose to make his home where there was plenty of fuel, wood, which he could gather without much effort. This combination—hunting, fishing, canoeing, and plenty of wood—he readily found along the larger streams, such as the Des Moines River, the Iowa, and other rivers.

A number of Indians were found along the creeks in Ballard Grove, and along the Skunk River. They were of the friendly kind and at no time caused any serious trouble, in fact, the whites mixed with them readily—visited with them in their wigwams and traded with them. The squaws traveled through the country in favorable weather, primarly to beg or trade furs for things to eat. Very often they traveled in improvised carts—poles serving as shafts, which were tied to a sort of a harness to an old horse. On the ends, which dragged on the ground, they chose to tie such things as they took along. The men remained at home.

One by one the wigwams and the Indian sheds became fewer and by 1885 they had about all disappeared and the Indians gone—to join the Indian settlements in Tama County or reservations in other sections.

For some reason or another the Indians were more numerous along the course of Big Creek in Polk and Boone counties, and northwest of Polk City, it is said, there was quite an Indian village. Along the Des Moines River they had extensive camps and trails—happy hunting grounds, which they reluctantly gave up with the coming of the white race.

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Memories from Elizabeth and JaVerna Maland whom I met with on October 22, 2008, in Huxley, Iowa:

Elizabeth born ca. 1914 and JaVerna born ca. 1916 remember their Grandma Severaid telling them that Indians used to come to the farm for food, either to beg for it or to bargain items they had made for food. Their grandparents, John and Elizabeth Severeid, lived a mile south and a half a mile west of the Palestine church. Elizabeth said the Indians used to camp along the Skunk River near Ballard Grove and by the Walnut Grove cemetery. She thought there was something in the Huxley centennial book about them camping by the Walnut Grove cemetery, but when I reviewed the *Huxonian*, I did not find anything.

Location Information (82-24-31): The Severeid farmstead was in the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 31, Union Township.

Location Information (82-24-01): Walnut Grove Cemetery is located in the northwest quarter of Section 1, Palestine Township.

Location Information (82-24-13, 14, & 24): Ballard Grove could be any place in Sections 13, 14, & 24, Palestine Township. plus Union Township

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Information from Nels Nord, Huxley, Iowa:

February 27, 2012: Received a phone call in response to the letter I sent to Nels about a 2009 conversation we had about Meskwaki camping in his father's 41 acres near Huxley. Nels shared two stories that are summarized below:

#1: Nels' father owned 41 acres near Huxley where he kept horses, the southeast quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 13 and a small parcel in the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of the same section, Palestine Township. In the southeast corner of the 41 acres, Hetland Creek flowed into Ballard Creek, and Nels remembers Tom Erickson, born 1905, telling him that Meskwaki camped there, a story Tom heard from his father, Lars Erickson. Nels also recalled finding arrow heads and other Indian relics in this area which is now a housing development.

Note: Lars Erickson (1871-1956) emigrated in 1893 or 1894. Did not find him on the 1895 Census for Story County, but he was enumerated in Palestine Township on the 1900 Census with a wife and two children born in Iowa.

Location Information (82-24-13): According to a 1902 plat map of Palestine Township, the camp site location was on the west side of Hetland Creek in the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 13 close to where Hetland Creek flowed into Ballard Creek.

#2: Nels, who was born in 1941, remembers 10 to 15 Meskwaki coming to Huxley in covered wagons in the mid-1940s to have their mares bred by his father's champion stallion, Eagle, a horse that was an offspring of Gene Autry's horse, Champion. At that time, his father was keeping his horses by Kalsem Park, and the park is where the Meskwaki camped while they were having their mares bred. From Huxley, they went to Tama County.

Note: Based on what I learned from Johnathan Buffalo on February 21, 2012 (see general informaton section above), they must have traveled by train from Oklahoma to Huxley, and likely traveled by train from Huxley to the Meskwaki Settlement.

March 12, 2012: Nels called with corrections to my drafts of his stories, corrections that are reflected in the summaries above, and to inform me he had visited with his older brother and sister and they confirmed his memories of Meskwaki coming to Huxley to have their mares bred. His brother and sister thought it would have been 1944, 45, or 46.

Nels also told me about another place about a mile east of the Hetland Creek campsite where people have found tomahawks and arrowheads on land owned by Hetlands. According to 1897/98 Maxwell County Directory, H. Hetland owned 10 acres in District 1, Union Township (Sections 17, 18, 19, & 20). A 1902 plat map of Union Township shows a Hetland owning a strip of land on the north side of northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 19 that looks like it is approximately 7-8 acres. This is the same general area described in the next campsite location obtained from Neoma Tomlinson.

March 12, 2012: Received email from Nels stating that all the above information is correct.

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Information from Neoma Tomlinson, Huxley, Iowa:

April 23, 2009: We took Neoma Tomlinson out to the Bauge farm today to see what is left of the Bauge farmstead. To return to Huxley, we took the road east from the Bauge farm (300th Street) and followed the route Nils and Synneva would have taken to the Palestine church. Just after we turned right on 560th Avenue to head south to the church, Neoma told a story she had heard from her mother. Neoma said the home on the east side of 560th Avenue just after making the turn to go south was the old Nernes home and down the hill is where the Indians would camp. She said when her mother, Nellie (1892-1938), was a young girl she was at the place where the Indians were camped, and a woman left and went into the woods. A while later she returned carrying a baby in her arms, and only then did Nellie realize that she had gone off in the woods alone to have her baby. I asked Neoma how old her mother would have been at the time and she said eight or nine.

Location Information (82-23-18): The Nernes farmstead was in Section 18, Union Township. The area that Neoma pointed out was in a well-protected area at the bottom of the hill on the east side of the road and north side of Ballard Creek in the northwest corner of Section 19, Union Township.

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Information from Marcella Demgen, Wilmar, Minnesota:

May 19, 2012: Marcella and her niece, Susan Shore, came to visit us. Susan brought Marcella to Des Moines to attend a reunion of graduates of the Iowa Lutheran Nursing program where Marcella graduated in 1941. Marcella, who was born in 1919, is a granddaughter of Osmund Sheldahl (182401900), the leader of the 1854 scouting party from Lisbon, Illinois, that selected the area southwest of Cambridge as the site for a new Norwegian settlement, and her father is Martin Sheldahl (1888-1969), a son from Osmund's second marriage. Marcella still lives in her own home, drives, and has a very clear mind. Marcella recalled her father telling her that Osmund told him Indians came to their farm to trade for chickens. She didn't remember her father telling her what the Indians had to trade with, but she was sure her father told her they came to the farmstead to trade for chickens.

Location Information (82-24-25): The Sheldahl farmstead was in the southeast corner of the southeast quarter of Section 24, Palestine Township, about a mile and a half south of the place where Neoma Tomlinson told us that Indians camped in Section 18, Union Township.

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From the *Tri-County Times*, June 17, 1976, "Their Norwegian Honeymoon Was American Farming," An article about Mathilda Tesdell, born 1893 to Lars and Anna (Maland) Tesdell.:

Note: Mathilda's father, Lars, was the son of Lars (1829-1888) and Martha Tesdell who settled in Story County in 1855.

Indians and Town Life: Mathilde was the oldest daughter and the third oldest child in Lars and Anna's family. There were six children altogether, and Mathilde has clear memories of those years when the Tesdell family was living together on their rurual Cambridge farm.

During the early part of the 20th century, Indians would still camp in groves near Cambridge and Huxley, and Mathilde saw large numbers of them come to the Tesdell farm asking for food.

"It was when I was young," Mathilde said. "If you pleased them they were friendly. They'd ask for chicken and white flour, but the men hardly ever came. The Mrs. would come on a pony with a child on her back. They lived south of Cambridge. There was a stream of water down there and they liked to fish."

Earlier in the article, it states, "...but 83-year-old Mathilde Tesdell is still living on an 80-acre farm west of Cambridge that has been in her family since 1886. She never married, and lives today on the farm that her father, also named Lars Tesdell, bought before the turn of the century."

Location Information (82-23-29): On the 1880 plat map for Union Township, a Lars Tesdahl owns 80 acres in the southeast quarter of Section 29, Union Township, and the Apland School, the school Mathilde attended and refers to in the article, is in the southwest corner of that section. Quite sure this must be the farmstead she is referring to.

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From *The Cambridge Leader*, Thursday, September 19, 1918: The Canning Factory is running with full capacity this week trying to catch up with the corn brought in. A large number of Indians have been brought here from the Tama Reservation who are assisting in the husking shed. These are bucks, squaws and little papooses. They are living in tents furnished by the company.

Note: "The Cambridge Canning Company was organized in 1904 and built on the west side of town near the Newton and Northwestern Railroad." (p. 89, *Cambridge, Iowa: The First 150 Years*, 2006)

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From *Cambridge, Iowa: The First 150 Years*, 2006:

pp. 1-2: The citizens of Cambridge were not strangers to the Meskwaki. For many years after their move to the reservation, Meskwaki families would make the long trip between Kansas and their new land in Tama. The river bottom near Cambridge was a good campsite on the trail, and Meskwaki women would sometimes come to the farmers' doors and usually ask for two things, white flour and a chicken. Sometimes the towns people would take up a collection and pay the Indians to perform a dance for them.

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From the *History of Polk County, 1880*, pp. 355 & 356:

Skunk River Settlements: The first settlements made in this locality were by Eli Trulinger and Michael Lavish. A small stream flows in a northeastern direction emptying into the Skunk River in section 23, township 80, range 22. Along this stream in sections 26, 27, 34 and 35 there was orginally a wide belt or "point" of timber. In April, 1846, Eli Trulinger took a claim and began a settlement in the southwestern part of the belt of timber in section 34. He having been the only settler in that locality for a number of years, the belt of timber took his name and the place is still known as Trulinger's Grove. This was a very desirable location in early days and the country became rapidly settled up, especially such portions as were well supplied with timber. Farther to the northwest, following the general course of the Skunk river, in sections 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, was orginally quite an extensive belt of timber. In May, 1846, Michael Lavish took a claim there and the place is still called Lavish Grove.

Among the early settlers in that neighborhood were Nathan Webb, Ezekiel Jennings, Joseph Jones and a son of Michael Lavish. This was a favorite resort in early times for trappers and hunters; game of all kinds abounded in the timber and region round about, while fur-bearing animals and fish, for which Skunk river has always been famous, were easily taken in great numbers. Wandering bands of Indians belonging to the peaceable Pottawattami tribe, and a remnant of the Mesquakie, who remained long after the stipulations of the treaty of 1842 went into effect, made this region a favorite resort. The Mesquakie band originally lived on the south bank of the Iowa river, near where is now the western boundary of Tama county. They were removed west with the other Indians in 1845-46, but many of them wandered back to their old hunting grounds. For a time the government delined to allow them a *pro rata* share of their annuity unless they would return to their reservation. They, however, persisted in remaining and from time to time acquired the title to several tacts of land, amounting to over four hundred acres, when the government changed its policy, paying them their proportion of an annuity, and allowing them to remain. There a remnant of the tribe still lives, cultivating a portion of the land, and as a rule, behaving themselves in a becoming manner. During certain portions of the year they leave their home and visit other portions of the state, either on hunting excursions, or to dispose of the pelts they have already taken. The Indians who are frequently seen in Polk County, belong to that band. During the early settlement of Polk county, they frequently visited this locality, and especially to the settlers along Skunk River they were a familiar sight. The few families of early settlers were seldom molested by these roving bands of savages, although they were frequently very saucy and threatening. These roving bands were more numerous in the Skunk River settlements than any other part of Polk County, owing to the splended facilities for hunting and fishing. It was no unusal occurrence for as many as fifty deer to be found in one drove in the Lavish settlement. Wolves also were very numberous and troublesome. It is said that in the winter of 1846-47 a pack of these noxious animals attacked a man by the name of Elliot; he was on horseback and was compelled to flee for his life; the wolves pursued him a distance of eight miles.

Further to the northwest was Corey's Grove, named thus in honor of Walker Corey who settled there in 1846; John Fisher also settled therein at an early time and these two were the only settlers who lived in that neighborhood for some time. This settlement was the farthest north in the Skunk River valley, and the two solitary settlers had many hardships to endure. They, however, aided each other. When there was no flour, as was frequently the case, they used bran and when this was gone they ate cakes made of pounded corn.

Location Information: Although the author states the Lavish Grove area was a favorite hunting and trapping area, it is assumed Meskwaki and Pottawattami were seen frequently in all three groves. They are listed below beginning with Cory's Grove, the most northern grove in the Skunk River settlements in Polk County:

(81-23-27): Cory's Grove is in Section 27, Elkhart Township, approximately seven miles slightly southeast of Cambridge. On the 1880 Census, there were a few Norwegians enumerated in Elkhart Township, but more in the township to its west, Lincoln Township.

(80-23-5, 6, 7, 8, & 9): Lavish Grove is in Sections 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 in Franklin Township. In 1880, there were Norwegians living in this township.

(80-22-26, 27, 34 & 35): Trulingers Grove was in Sections 26, 27, 34 & 35 of Franklin Township, Polk County. On the 1880 Census, there were no Norwegians enumerated in this township.

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From the Slater centennial book, *I Remember Slater, Iowa*, 1989:

p. 18: "The Last of the Native Americans," 1970 History of the Town of Slater—a short summary of Andrew Maland's 1938 article, "The Indians," which is included in full above.

p. 229: Mrs. Queensland, Slater pioneer: "Indians often stopped to ask for food. Several members of the family became ill with smallpox and her brother Oliver died from the effects of it. During this illness, an Indian stopped for food but as they were about to give it to him, he noticed someone was sick and refused to take it."

Note: Mrs. Queensland's parents were Ole and Anna Halverson who settled on 160 acres south of Sheldahl. She married Knut Queensland in 1880, so her memory about her brother must be pre-1880.

Location Information (81-24-17): The Halvorson farmstead was located in the northwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 17, Lincoln Township, three miles south of Sheldahl, Iowa, in Polk County. This location is closer to Big Creek than it is to the Skunk River, so it is quite possible the Indians who visited the Halvorson farmstead were camped along Big Creek.

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Summary of other sources consulted for references of Meskwaki near Cambridge and Huxley:

Reviewed Allen's 1929 study of Cambridge and found no references to Indians.
Reviewed Sheldahl's history book and found no references to Indians.
Reviewed the *Huxonian* and found no references to Indians.
Reviewed Carrie Larson's *Larson Family History*, *The Life Stories of Glen and Helen Severson*, and *The Story of the Larson Clan* (Jonas T. Larson) familiy histories and found no references to Indians.

February 25, 2012: Called the Cambridge library to see if they had Florence Wheeler's notebooks. They do not, but she gave me Don Erickson's phone number to call to arrange a time to look at them. She also told me that Florence is now living at the Sunny View Care Center in Ankeny.

February 25, 2012: Went to visit Florence Wheeler. She didn't remember if she had ever collected anything about Indians camping near Cambridge, but did did remember that arrowheads and artifacts were found on Kermit Griffith's land near Cambridge. She suggested I contact her daughter-in-law, Karen Wheeler, to find out how to get in touch with the owner of the land. Believe she said he lives in Slater now. She also suggested calling Don Erickson.

February 28, 2012: Called Jim Bates to see if he had come across any references Meskwaki around Cambridge during his family research. He had not.

March 1, 2012: Called Delores Lewis to see if she had come across any references Meskwaki around Cambridge during her family research. She did remember her Grandma Nelson saying something about Indians fishing along the Skunk River, but nothing more specific about it.

Nevada Area References

In compiling this collection of pioneer references to Meskwaki along the Upper South Skunk River, I could not help noticing the difference in tone expressed by editors of the Nevada and Roland newspapers from those found in the Ames and Story City newspapers. It's impossible to determine if the reports from the Roland and Nevada newspapers reflect the views of the residents in the area or strictly the bias of the reporters. However, perhaps the readers of the Ames and Story City newspapers who lived in closer proximity to Meskawki and interacted with them more frequently had a more positive attitude toward the Meskwaki.

Certainly, there must have been white settlers living near the Skunk River who viewed the presence of the Meskwaki with contempt, too, but the prevailing negative attitude contained in this collection is one of fear, a fear mostly likely related to a race and culture they did not understand. Other settlers were more accepting of the Meskwaki as evidenced by their willingness to let them camp on their land and occasionally visiting them in their wikiups, and then there were others who admired the Meskwaki way of life.

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From the Nevada newspapers:

Note: I found these news items when making a through review of the Nevada newspapers up through 1880 looking for information pertaining to Norwegians:

From *The Story County Ægis*, May 11, 1864: Aboriginals: A party of Potawatamie Indians passed through town last Monday noon escorted through the streets by a crowd of boys to whom they were a novel sight. For disgusting specimans of humanity they are only exceeded by copperheads and traitors.

Note: These Potawatamie Indians were likely members of the Potawatamie Tribe who formerly lived in southeastern Iowa and who, like the Meskwaki, had been removed to a reservation in Kansas in 1846.

From the *Story County Ægis*, March 26, 1868: The Indians in Montana are becoming quite troublesome. One or two trains were recently captured by them, but to what extent they were plundered it is not yet known.

Note: Montana was the original name of Boone, Iowa, when the town was founded in 1865, the year before the railroad arrived. The name of the town was changed to Boone in 1871.

From *The Story County Representative*, September 27, 1870: A few straggling representatives of the Tama county Mesquakies were through town Saturday, peering into stores and coveting white man's red goods. Their race of glory is about run. Peace go with them.

From *The Story County Representative*, May 4, 1871: A few specimens of the Masquaka Indians were in town on Tuesday, practicing their skill with the bow and arrow upon pennies and five cent pieces. One little specimen about five years old was the main attraction. He was kept quite busily employed and his practice showed him quite expert with his bow and arrows. One's exalted eastern taught ideas of the noble red men of the forest lose a great deal of their charm when viewing those greasy, dirty, specimens of humanity. May the time speedily come when they will be either civil bred or among the extinct races of the earth.

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From *A History of Story County, Iowa* by W. G. Allen, 1887:

p. 17: THE WAR DANCE BY INDIANS, 1856.

About six months prior to the Spirit Lake massacre, we had the South Public Square (now a beautiful City Park) full of Indians; but they were friendly. They were Pottawattamie and Musquaka Indians and were camping near the old ford of the West Indian Creek, on the east side, a short distance southwest from where the cemetery is now situated. There were probably one hundred and fifty or two hundred of them, big and little, squaws and all. Well, some of the citizens of Nevada raised a sum of money, by collection, for the Indians if they would give us a "war dance." They agreed to do so; so in the afternoon of the day, in September I think, they assembled on the square named, equipped for the occasion in full Indian style, painted and tattooed for the dance. With some kind of a wild and unnatural sound of "turn, turn, turn," in the ring, they began their performance, squaws as well as "Injins," with a hideous noise and contortions of the face and body, jumping and squatting, wheeling round and round and chanting their "war song" as they would prance around the ring which was, perhaps, one hundred feet in circumference.

They surely looked frightful, or would have looked so had they meant "war." But they did not mean war. In about six months from then, other Indians did mean war, as shown by their cruelty and massacre of our people in the Spirit Lake horror, which is noticed elsewhere.

Well, this war dance on the square lasted one or two hours. During this time the little "Injins" six to eight years old, with bow and arrow, would shoot and knock a five cent piece set in a split stick nearly every time, a distance of fifteen to eighteen feet. The five cent pieces then were not large as some we now have. When the money was hit or knocked out of the stick, it was given to the little Injin as his reward for sharp shooting.

After the dance was over, and some begging done by the squaws, they returned to their camp, and on the following day they left us.

Location Information (83-22-12): The camp site would have been in the southeast quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 12, Nevada Township.

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From "Alderman Daughter's Story of Nevada" by Minnie A. Mills (1861-1956), daughter of the founders of Nevada, Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Alderman, in the *Nevada Evening Journal*, June 13, 1953, a special edition of the newspaper celebrating the centennial anniversary of Nevada and Story County.

Timber on the Hill

There was a lot of timber on the hill where the west part of the cemetery is now when I was large enough to go to the woods.

There were oak, black walnut, hickory nut, wild plum, wild crab apple, choke cherry, red and black haws with wild grape, gooseberry, plums, and crab apples for fruit.

All along where the 4-H grounds are now, there were hazel nut bushes and Nevada children had all the nuts they cared to store for winter.

The creek, too, used to be quite a "river," overflowing its banks during the June freshet.

Indians Camped

The Indians used to camp each fall on the east bank of the creek about where the patriotic organizations now hold their exercises on Memorial Day.

They were a dirty lot at that time and us children stayed close to father while we looked them over.

The Indians were not hostile, but they were given anything they wanted—and no argument. They came to the homes and took food, mostly. My mother once had a big watermelon in a tub of cold water. An Indian came in, took the melon, and left. Watermelons were a big treat as they were very scarce, and mother did hate to give up what she thought would be a treat for her children.

Location Information (83-22-12): The camp site would have been in the southeast quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 12, Nevada Township.

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See Goodspeed's *Biographical and historical memoirs of Story County, Iowa*, 1890:

pp. 128-129: Small bands of friendly Indians sometimes camped in the groves, or on the borders of the streams, fishing and hunting, and occasionally startled the lone housekeeper by peering into the window, with nose flat against the pane, instead of giving an alarm by rapping on the door. Mrs. Dr. Kellogg had such a visit at the old Barndollar House in Nevada. The Indian had killed a deer and with a broken and bloody knife in his hand wished to borrow another. The Doctor had gone in the direction of the slain deer, and was an object of much solicitude till he put in an appearance. S. S. Statler, when quite new to the country, got lost from his hunting party on the open prairie in Howard Township. He was approached by an Indian on horseback armed, and of serious and formidable aspect. There was neither tree nor habitation in sight, and the Pennsylvania "tender-foot" was greatly relieved when he learned that old Johnny Green preferred his tobacco to his scalp.

p. 160: There is a brief reference camping by Indian Creek in southeastern Story County.

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From William O. Payne's *History of Story County, Iowa*, 1911, vol. 1:

pp. 87-88: THE INDIAN SCARE: In the spring of 1857 before break of day one memorable morning, a man drove to the McLain house, his horses covered with foam. His wagon contained his little family and such valuables as could be hastily gathered and loaded. He came from the direction of Story City and probably from what is now Hamilton County. He was escaping from savage Indians on the war-path who were murdering and burning everything in his neighborhood. He evidently regarded his own escape as a very remarkable occurrence and that all near him had been exterminated. His excitement was contagious in a high degree. It spread to the population of our village and while valorous men took measures to defend their homes, the women ran to and fro in wild confusion. It was seriously contemplated to gather the women and children into the court house and fortify it against the savages. This would have been about as practical as going to sea in a paper box. But probably, it was soon learned that the savages had not ventured far south of Spirit Lake where they really had committed horrible destruction of life and property wiping out the frontier settlement; but the scare was wide-spread and was the cause of many absurd incidents.

Among these it is remembered that Dr. Carr, who was then living at Bloomington [the next town west of Nevada before Ames was founded in 1864], went out north of that town to visit a patient who had veen very ill on the day previous, and on arriving at the house found only evidence of a very hasty flight of the whole family, including his patient, and by further inquiry learned of the expected descent of the savages. All over the country old guns were collected and preparations were made to give the redskins a warm reception.

There were some peaceably disposed Indians yet in the country and the customs of these were calculated to startle those women on whom they made calls for the first time. The habits of the Indian in such cases was to appear at the window and, if necessary, to press his face close to the window pane and thus scan the interior. If he discovered any of the family in possession he would express his pleasure with a hideous grin of approval and forthwith open the door and make himself at home. The equanamity of the women who were temporarily alone on such occasions was liable to be seriously distrubed. Mrs. Kellog reports having had such a visit from an Indian who had killed a deer over on the west side of the creek and had broken his knife and wished to borrow another. It happened that her husband had gone to visit a patient in that direction in the morning, and her anxiety for his return and escape from the bloody knife of that Indian and her uneasiness for several hours seem much more ludicrous now than they did then.

ANOTHER INDIAN SCARE: Sam S. Statler (still an honored citizen of Nevada) is said to have been out looking up government lands in what is now Warren Township, perhaps in the early part of 1855. He became separated from his party and while working out some lines [surveying lines?] he came upon East Indian Creek near the old Burkhart place. As he looked across the valley toward the south he saw approaching him upon a white steed, to his intense horror and terror, a wild savage with gun and knife, arrayed in blanket, leggings and feathered headgear and bedecked with war-paint. Sam was then a tenderfoot from the mountains of Pennsylvania, the scene of many a horrible massacre in the early days, and all the traditions of his childhood rose before him. He had not even a pocket-knite on his person with which to withstand the assault of his desperate and hereditary foe. Poor Sam, his blood froze in his veins, while great beads of sweat stood on his surface. He could neither hope to escape by flight nor by victory. In sheer desperation he awaited his anticipated butchery, alone and helpless, confessed his sins and forgave his enemies, as he hoped for forgiveness among the stranger he was so soon to meet. At steady gait and with undaunted mien, the wily but open foe came on. The gleam of his fiery eye was now close at hand. Fear and trembling were upon the victim. His knees smote together. The hair of his head stood up. The Indian raised his hand. He made an expressive gesture toward his mouth. He grunted "Bacca." Sam drew a full inspiration of the free air. His hat settled down again. In haste he drew from his stores a large plug of the coveted weed, which has scarcely been broken upon and presented it to the unknown but now admired chieftain. The latter gave a grunt of satisfaction, cut off a liberal chew, dropped the remainder into some mysterious fold of his primitive garmets and went his winding way. Sam afterwards learned that he had in this never-to-be-forgotten way met old Johnny Green, chief of the ever peaceful Musquakies, and in fact at subsequent meetings the parties had some quiet sport over the terror which Sam freely acknowledged that he experienced at their first interview.

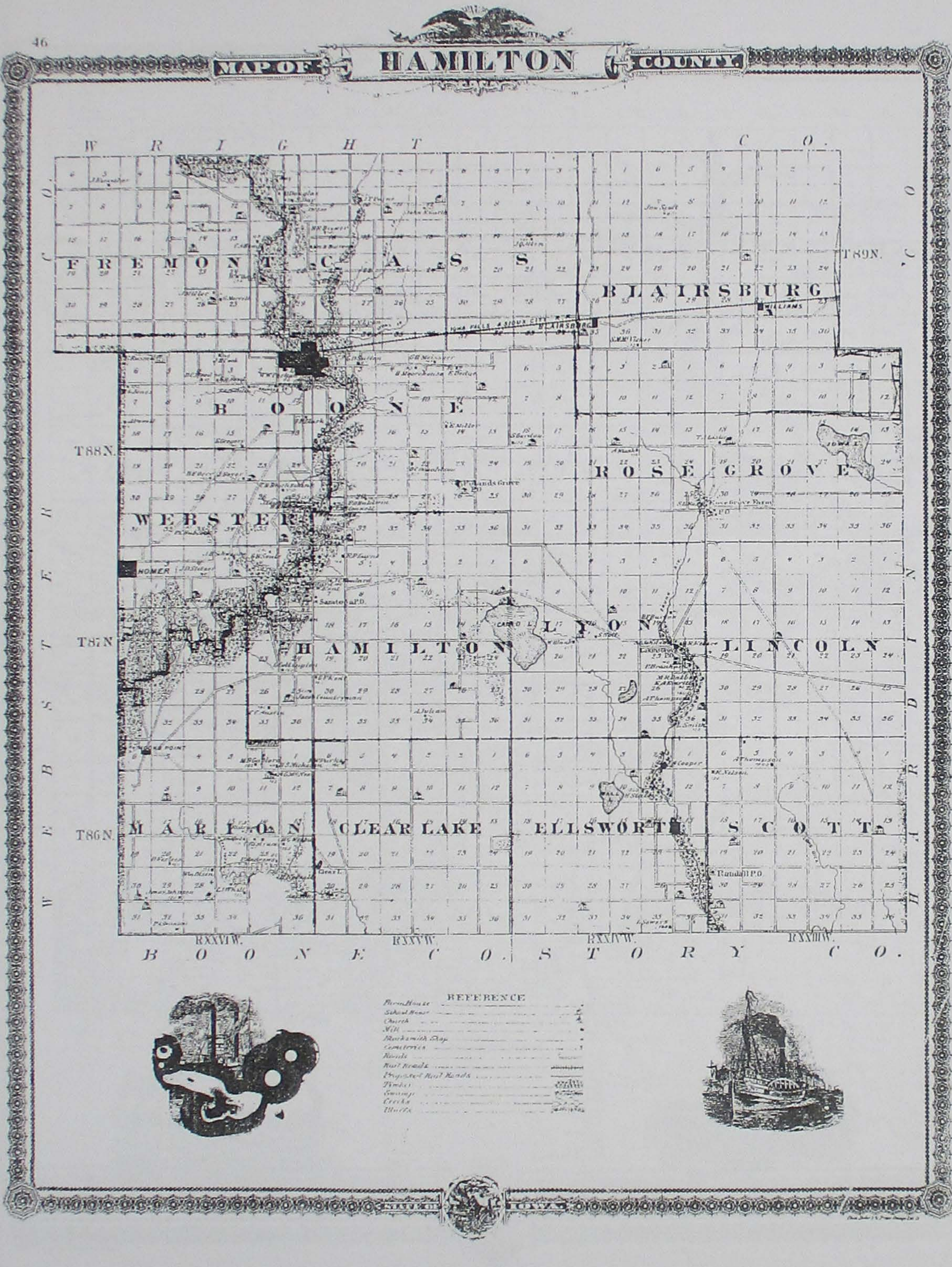
Note: Johnny Green was Chief Che-me-use, Chief of the Meskwaki and known as friend of the white man. He died at his favorite camping spot beside the Iowa River in 1868. More information about him is available at the following Web sites:

http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=17036409
http://iagenweb.org/boone/history/boonehistorymiltonlott.htm
http://iagenweb.org/ringgold/history/misc/hist-beforestatehood-settlement.html

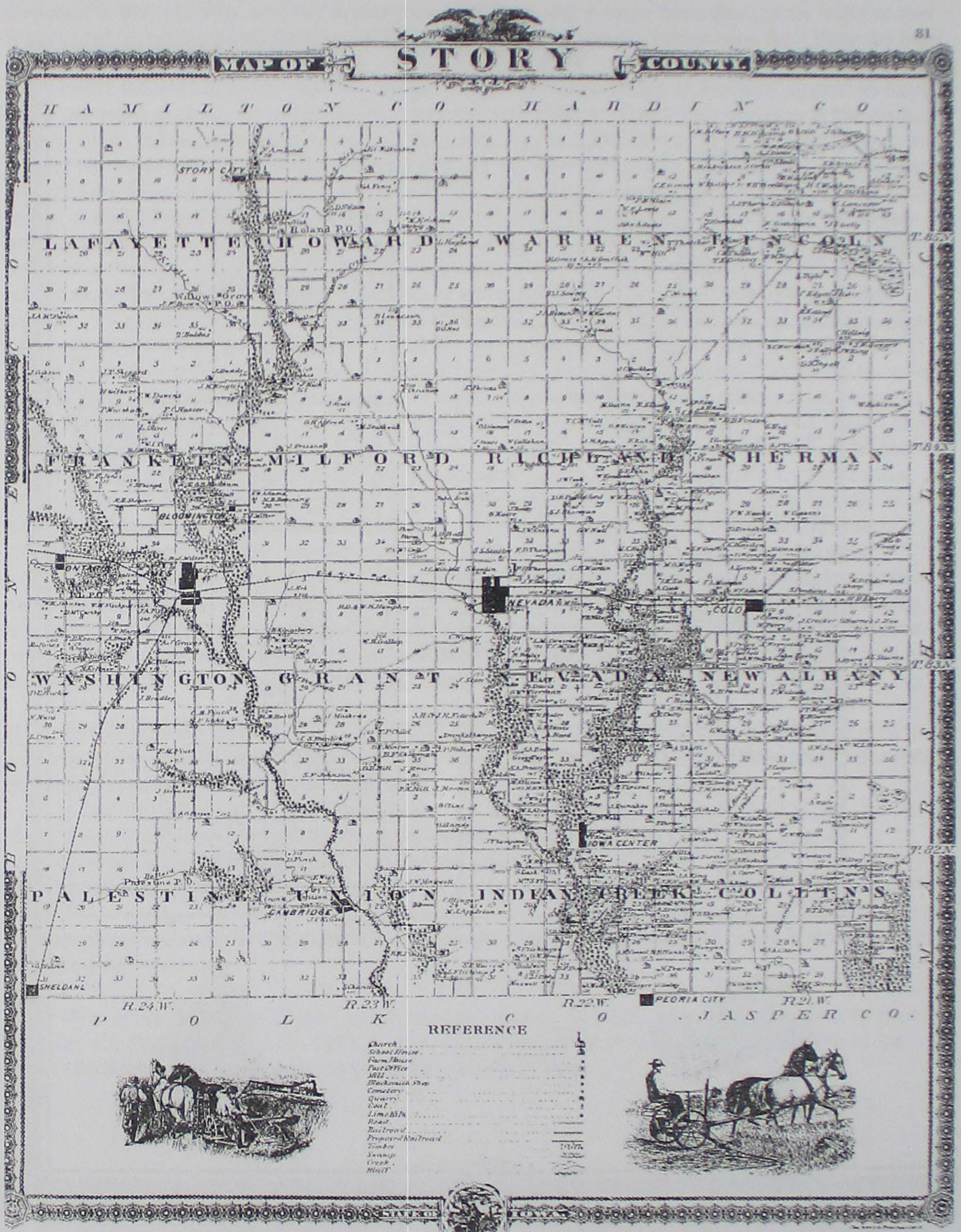
A fictionalized account of his presence at Hook's Point, Hamilton County, Iowa, is contained in the following reference:

They Who Were Strong by Clara Layton Madsen and G. F. Hook, from Hamilton County (see Chapter 12, "Indians," pp. 121-125). A copy of this history of Hook's Point is available at the State Historical Society of Iowa library in Des Moines, Iowa.

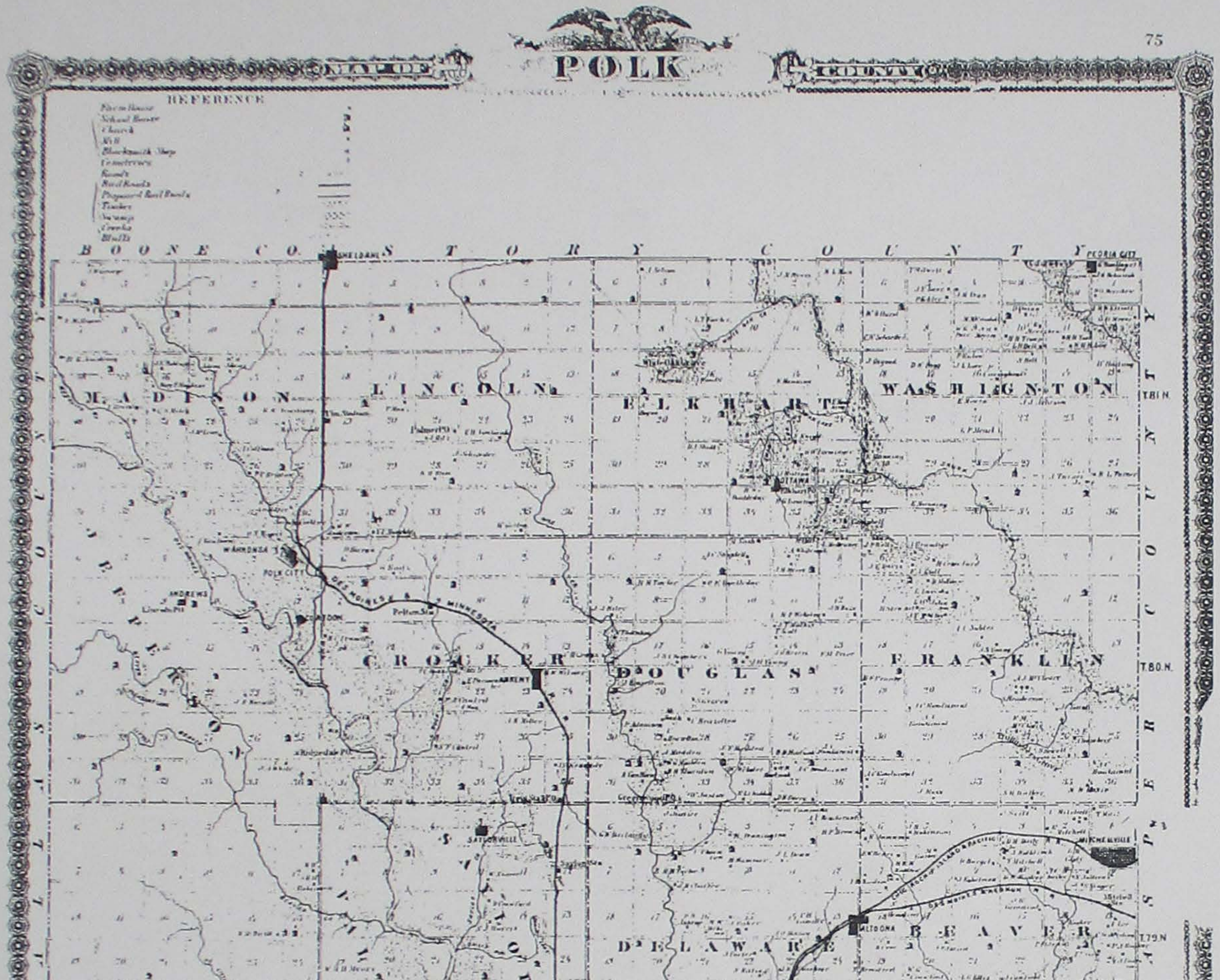
1875 Andreas Atlas Map of Hamilton County


46
MAP OF HAMILTON COUNTY
W R I G H T C O.
W E B S T E R C O.
H A R D I N C O.
B O O N E C O.
S T O R Y C O.
FREMONT
CASS
BLAIRSBURG
BOONE
ROSE GROVE
WEBSTER
HOMER
LYON
LINCOLN
HAMILTON
MARION
CLEAR LAKE
ELLSWORTH
SCOTT
T89N.
T88N.
T87N.
T86N.
RXXVI W.
RXXV W.
RXXIV W.
RXXIII W.
IOWA FALLS & SIOUX CITY
WILLIAMS
CARROLL
IOWA L.
Randall P.O.
REFERENCE
Farm House
School House
Church
Mill
Blacksmith Shop
Cemeteries
Roads
Rail Roads
Proposed Rail Roads
Timber
Swamps
Creeks
Bluffs
STATE OF IOWA

1875 Andreas Atlas Map of Story County


81
MAP OF
STORY
COUNTY
HAMILTON CO.
HARDIN CO.
BOONE CO.
MARSHALL CO.
POLK CO.
JASPER CO.
LAFAYETTE
HOWARD
WARREN
LINCOLN
FRANKLIN
MILFORD
RICHLAND
SHERMAN
WASHINGTON
GRANT
NEVADA
NEW ALBANY
PALESTINE
UNION
INDIAN CREEK
COLLINS
STORY CITY
Roland P.O.
Willow Grove P.O.
BLOOMINGTON
ONTARIO
NEVADA
COLO
IOWA CENTER
Palestine P.O.
CAMBRIDGE
SHELDAHL
PEORIA CITY
T.85 N.
T.84 N.
T.83 N.
T.82 N.
R.24 W.
R.23 W.
R.22 W.
R.21 W.
REFERENCE
Church
School House
Farm House
Post Office
Mill
Blacksmith Shop
Cemetery
Quarry
Coal
Lime Kiln
Road
Railroad
Proposed Railroad
Timber
Swamp
Creek
Bluff

1875 Andreas Atlas Map of Polk County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MAP OF POLK COUNTY
REFERENCE
BOONE CO.
STORY COUNTY
JASPER COUNTY
DALLAS COUNTY
WARREN COUNTY
MADISON
LINCOLN
ELKHART
WASHINGTON
CROCKER
DOUGLAS
FRANKLIN
WALNUT
SAYLOR
DELAWARE
BEAVER
GRANT
FOUR MILE
BLOOMFIELD
ALLEN
CAMP
JEFFERSON
SHELDAHL
POLK CITY
SAYLORVILLE
DES MOINES
MITCHELLVILLE
ALTOONA
RISING SUN
SEBASTOPOL
COMMERCE
AVON
ADELPHI
T.81N.
T.80N.
T.79N
T.78N
R.XXV W
R.XXIV W
R.XXIII W
R.XXII W
IOWA

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